SPORTS / A24

Pacquiao-Marquez II slated March 15 in Las Vegas

NEWS / A4

Subic antismuggling chief (ret.) Lt. Gen. Jose Calimlim dies; 62

WORLD / A21

Teen accused of hacking 1.3M computers, skimming millions arrested in New Zealand

SATURDAY SPECIAL / L1

Neil Diamond confesses Caroline Kennedy inspired his hit song, 'Sweet Caroline'

Cameraman arrested not once, but twice

By Julie M. Aurelio

AS IF COVERING THE Magdalo soldiers' standoff in a five-star hotel and then being hauled off to Camp Bagong Diwa in Taguig City weren't enough,

CAMERAMAN/ A15

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

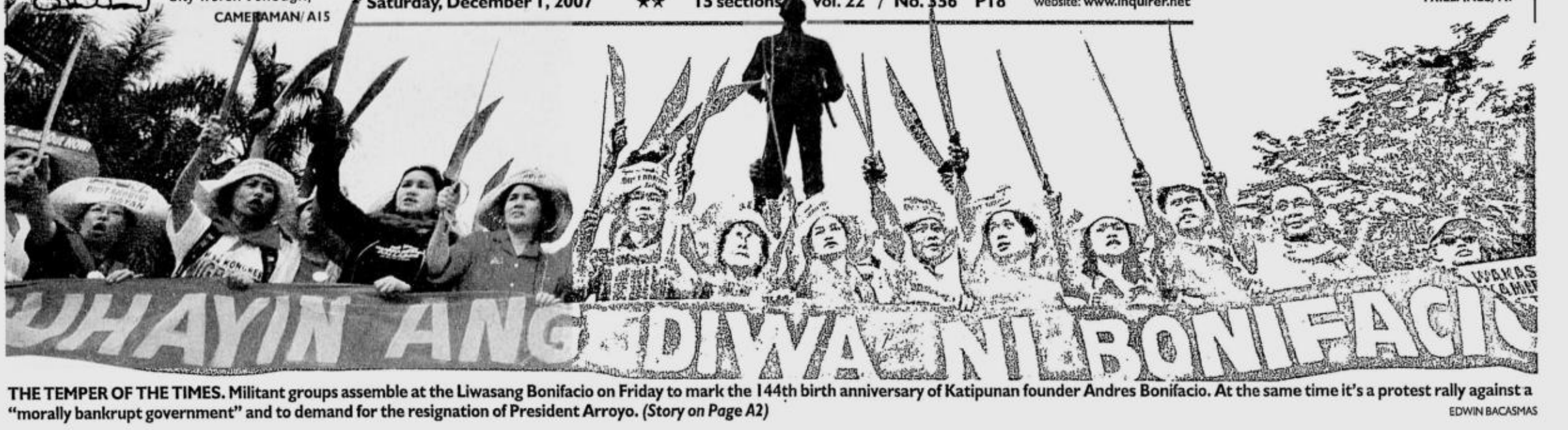
Saturday, December 1, 2007 ★★ 15 sections Vol. 22 / No. 356 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

Trillanes offers to pay for damage to the Pen

By Gil C. Cabacungan, Nancy Carvajal, DJ Yap and Christine Avendaño

THE FAMED WATERFALLS CONTINUE TO cascade down the tiered facade of the Peninsula Hotel in Makati City as if to calm jitters from last Thursday's standoff involving the group led by Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV.

TRILLANES/ A9



THE TEMPER OF THE TIMES. Militant groups assemble at the Liwasang Bonifacio on Friday to mark the 144th birth anniversary of Katipunan founder Andres Bonifacio. At the same time it's a protest rally against a "morally bankrupt government" and to demand for the resignation of President Arroyo. *(Story on Page A2)*

EDWIN BACASMAS

Razon: Plot still active

Rebellion charges set; 'shock' tactic defended

By Christine O. Avendaño, Alcuin Papa and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL Police defended the use of armored personnel carriers against the rebel occupants of the Manila Peninsula hotel being part of its "shock" strategy to force them to surrender, even as prosecutors last night began inquest proceedings on possible rebellion charges against them.

Director General Avelino Razon said the PNP's Special Action Force (SAF) used APCs to ram its way into the hotel lobby and to shock the group led by Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV and Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim.

"That was part of the strategy," he said, adding that the live .50-cal. rounds fired by the APCs were not targeted at anyone and were merely "persuasive fire."

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said he had assigned a team of 10 Department of Justice prosecutors to oversee the

REBELLION / A8

RAFFY LERMA

PICKING UP THE PIECES: The Peninsula is hard at work restoring its fabled lobby. Despite major repair work like this glass door battered by an Armored Personnel Carrier, the 5-star hotel will open on Monday at 3 p.m.

Manhunt on for 4 Magdalo officers

By Alcuin Papa and Nikko Dizon

POLICE AND THE MILITARY YESTERDAY launched a hunt for renegade Marine Capt. Nicanor Faeldon and at least three other officers—including one seen wearing a wig—following their abortive takeover of the Manila Peninsula hotel.

Officials said a captured document detailed a plan by four groups to seize control of the hotel and that they were looking into the possibility that politicians might be involved.

Philippine National Police (PNP) Director General Avelino Razon told reporters that the plot to destabilize the government "was still active."

Razon also said Faeldon could have slipped out of the hotel by posing as a member of media.

Razon said one of the four officers of the dissident Magdalo group the police were hunting for was seen wearing a black camouflage uniform and a wig.

"If you review video clips, there was an officer who was wearing black behind Lt. Trillanes [while Lim was reading his prepared statement to media]. He has long hair, (but it turned out) he was wearing a wig," Razon said.

He said he considered Faeldon to be "armed and dangerous."

RAZON/ A10

What was Trillanes thinking?

By Christian V. Esguerra and Arlyn dela Cruz

WHAT WAS SEN. ANTONIO Trillanes really up to?

Like-minded groups also seeking to oust President Macapagal-Arroyo are at a loss on whether Thursday's Manila Peninsula siege led by the ex-Navy officer was part of a wider conspiracy or simply one man's "spontaneous combustion."

Former Social Welfare Secretary Corazon "Dinky" Soliman of the Black and White Movement, ex-Ambassador Roy Seneres and actor Rez Cortez yesterday said they were caught by surprise when Trillanes and

WHAT WAS/ A6

Journalists cracked jokes as they waited for attack

By Julie M. Aurelio, Gil Cabacungan Jr. and DJ Yap

ABOUT 30 JOURNALISTS AND cameramen were inside the besieged Manila Peninsula on Thursday when government forces, almost two hours past the 3 p.m. ultimatum, launched an assault to flush out Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV and his renegade band.

REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

Three of them were INQUIRER reporters.

These are fragments and hazy images from their eyewitness encounter with what has become known in military parlance as "shock and awe"—as swiftly carried out inside a luxury hotel.

AT AROUND 4:30 P.M., WORD went around that the assault

JOURNALISTS/ A11

Trying to make sense out of it all

By Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J.

COMMENTARY

BY THE TIME THIS PIECE comes out in print everything that can be said about the Manila Peninsula event, wise or unwise, will perhaps already have been said. Nevertheless let me try my hand at sorting out some of the aspects of it.

First of all, why did Senator Trillanes and his crew do it? A criminal act was committed, but I will leave the labeling of the offense to the government's army of lawyers. The obvious answer to my question, articulated by both Trillanes and Gen. Daniel Lim, was that their objective was to bring the administration of President Gloria Macapagal down. Immediately or in the distant future?

If immediate success was the objective, were they dreaming of a repeat of Edsa I, which ousted President Marcos, or of

TRYING/ A15

MEDIA ARRESTS

ABS-CBN plans to sue; PNP readies countersuit

By Jerome Aning and Alcuin Papa

OFFICERS OF ABS-CBN YESterday condemned the arrest of members of the media in the aftermath of the Thursday standoff at the Manila Peninsula, and said the network was studying the possibility of filing charges against the law enforcers involved.

But if push comes to shove, the Philippine National Police may respond with a suit of its own, according to PNP Director General Avelino Razon. He added, however, that he hoped things would not come to such a pass.

The New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists, an independent, nonprofit organization that works to safeguard press freedom worldwide, yesterday said: "This sort of mass

ABS-CBN/ A10

'Reming' survivor pins hopes on 4 photographs

By Jocelyn R. Uy and Tina Arceo-Dumlao

WITH DWINDLING FOOD SUBSIDY AND a flimsy shelter still serving as home for her and her two sons, this single mother from Guinobatan, Albay, is pinning her hopes on four precious photographs.

Lily Samson's treasures are actually sad souvenirs of Supertyphoon "Reming," which pounded Albay a year ago yesterday—wiping whole villages off the map and killing 734 people, including her mother, brother and 28 of her other kin.

The snapshots, she said, were taken by a photographer-friend of hers during President Macapagal-Arroyo's post-typhoon visit on Dec. 3 in Guinobatan, one of the hardest-hit areas.

She has hung on to the photographs since then, convinced that they would someday serve as solid evidence of the President's promise.

One shows an injured Samson showing Gina de Venecia, the Speaker's wife, the wounds that resulted from the rampage of floodwaters, boulders and mud unleashed by Reming from the slopes of Mt. Mayon.

Another is of a cameraman hovering

'REMING'/ A8

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SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2007

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern sections of Luzon and Visayas will have mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. The rest of the country will experience partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Mostly Cloudy	Tacloban	Mostly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Mostly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy

COMPILED BY: SCHATZI QUODALA, PDI RESEARCH/11/30/07 SOURCE: PAGASA

EZ2 FOUR DIGIT

3 16 2 2 6 7

(In exact order)

Mid-Day SUERTRES Evening

2 5 6 | 3 7 5

MEGALOTTO 6/45

15 19 25 27 33 41

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Bishops' rally fizzles out

A PROTEST ACTION calling for President Macapagal-Arroyo's resignation was relocated, dispersed, and eventually fizzled out—with none of the three bishops who were to lead it showing up.

A number of people showed up at Plaza Miranda yesterday, but they were the usual Friday crowd that gathers there either to scour the wet market or to pray at the Quiapo church.

The oust-Arroyo protest action scheduled for 2 p.m. at Plaza Miranda did not push through.

The Kilusang Makabansang Ekonomiya (KME), which was supposed to march from the University of Santo Tomas to Plaza Miranda, cut short its march and relocated to Morayta.

One of the KME protesters, who requested anonymity, said the KME decided to link up with protesters from the Akbayan group in front of the Far Eastern University on Morayta as only a handful showed up for their march and rally.

Another group of about 3,000 protesters under the militant Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) gathered at the Liwasang Bonifacio to mark the 144th birth anniversary of revolutionary hero Andres Bonifacio and protest what it called a "morally bankrupt government."

Leaders of Bayan, Bayan Muna party-list group and allied groups distanced themselves from the abortive coup in Makati on Thursday, but condemned the allegedly excessive force used to suppress it.

Bayan Muna party-list Rep. Satur Ocampo, who led the protesters, compared the Arroyo administration to the Spanish officials who oppressed the Filipinos.

"We're now seeing a rerun of the role of the Spanish colonial government, its excesses, the corruption, the human rights violations," he said in an interview.

After a brief program, the protesters decided to march toward Mendiola, cutting through the Rizal and Recto avenues, causing traffic jams.

Those who participated included Ocampo, Gabriela party-list Rep. Liza Maza, Anakpawis party-list Rep. Crispin Beltran, Bayan chair Carol Araullo, leaders of other allied groups, former transportation and communications secretary Josefina Lichauco and Linggoy Alcuaz.

The group was met near the corner of Morayta by Police Supt. Vicente Tan and told they could go no farther. They agreed to hold a program atop a flatbed truck, watched by a group of about 100 riot policemen. The protesters dispersed peacefully at about 5 p.m.

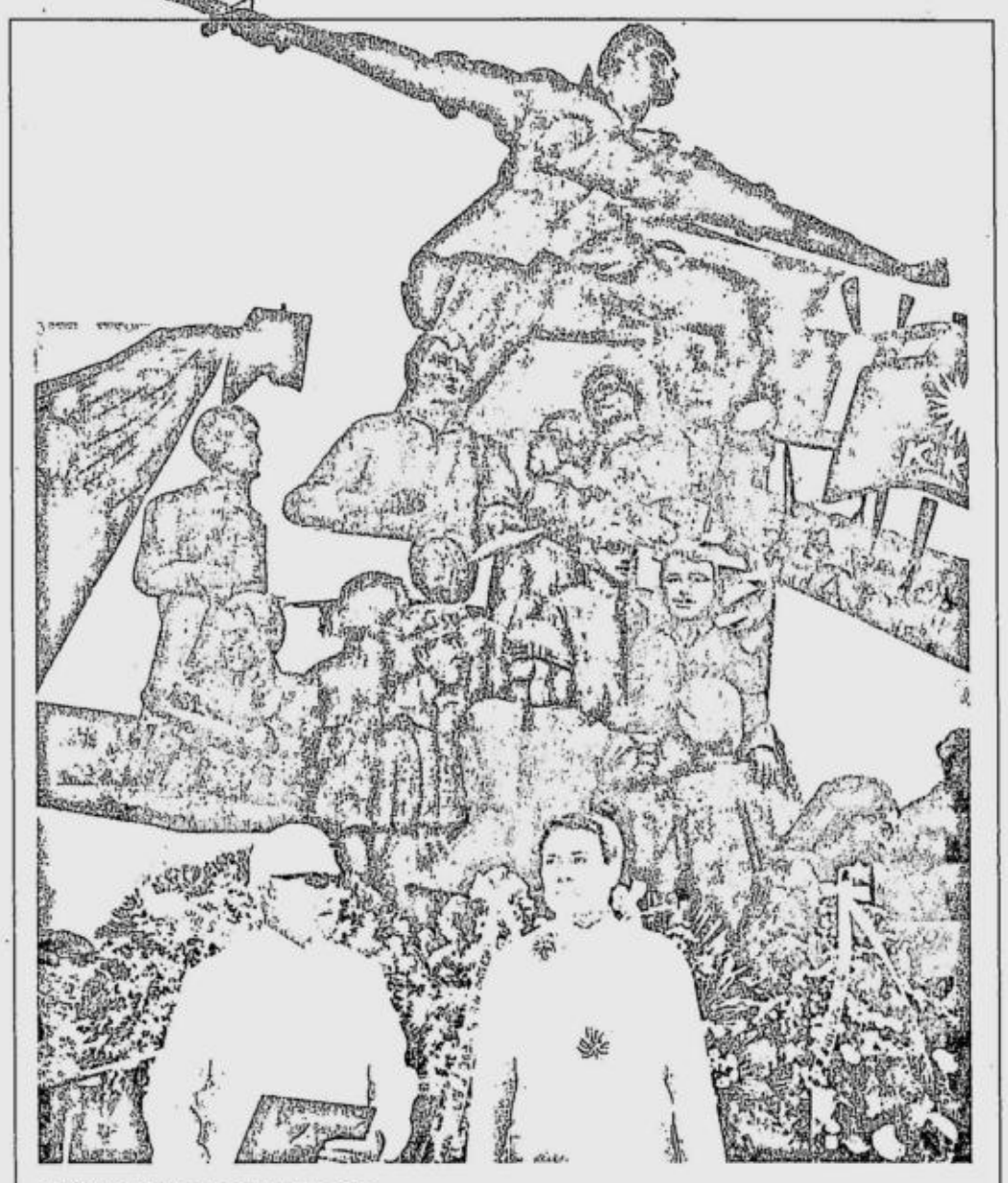
The three bishops—Novaliches Bishop Antonio Tobias, Infanta (Quezon) Bishop Emeritus Julio Labayen, and Caloocan Bishop Deogracias Iñiguez—never showed up at Plaza Miranda.

Labayen was being held by police for his participation in the Thursday stand-off in Makati, and was only released yesterday afternoon, while no reason was given for Tobias' absence.

Iñiguez was supposed to be coming from another engagement in Olongapo, but arrived too late to catch anything.

"None of the bishops were able to attend the rally," said Iñiguez.

Even KME president Jaime Regalario was a no-show at the scheduled protest action and could not be reached for comment. *Beverly T. Natividad*



HONORING BONIFACIO
Senate President Manny Villar is welcomed by Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim during the celebration of the 144th birthday of Andres Bonifacio at the Bonifacio Shrine in Manila. Villar was the guest of honor and speaker during the celebration. CESAR TOMAMBO

Aboitiz not in Transco bidding

THE ABOITIZ GROUP YESTERDAY said it has no interests in any of the consortia bidding for the assets of the National Transmission Corp (Transco).

"We are very aware of the restrictions by law prohibiting electricity distribution and generation companies like Aboitiz Power from any ownership in the transmission sector and we will abide by this restriction," a spokesperson from Aboitiz Power confirmed.

He added that "the present leadership of Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp (PSALM) should be commended for pursuing the privatization mandate by government with vigor and resolve. Investors are finally convinced that targets set for the privatization of power assets will be met and have been bidding record prices for the assets sold. Bidders are also very satisfied that the bidding process has been fair and very transparent."

"The result of PSALM's success is for the power industry to move closer to the open access thresholds set by law which is a priority set by government. We therefore believe the efforts of PSALM should be supported, and not derailed."

WHAT'S INSIDE

ANOTHER Batasan blast victim dies /A5

GMA OFF to Europe tonight /A7

Palawan leaders agree on Malampaya sharing

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—MALACAÑANG and the province of Palawan have forged an agreement to split royalty payments to the Malampaya gas project frozen by the Supreme Court pending its ruling regarding the project's ownership, according to Palawan Governor Joel T. Reyes.

President Arroyo sealed the agreement with Palawan leaders in Malacañang on Wednesday during a meeting that included Puerto Princesa Mayor Edward Hagedorn, who had earlier complained that the city had been left out in the initial negotiations and lobbied to block release of the royalty.

"We reached an agreement with the President to speed up the development of Palawan through the release of the disputed Malampaya money and also resolve the issue of the share of Puerto Princesa," Reyes said on Thursday.

Earlier reports indicated that the national government and Palawan would receive some P6 billion in royalty payments from Service Contract 38 or the Malampaya gas project.

The agreement provides for dividing the payments into three equal parts with the provincial government and the two congressional districts each getting a share.

Hagedorn blocked the initial agreement made late August, ostensibly because the deal excluded Puerto Princesa City, which had been a part of the 2nd district of Rep. Abraham Mitra before its ratification as a highly urbanized city in July.

Under the Local Government Code, Puerto Princesa City, being a highly urbanized city independent of the administrative control of the province, will no longer be entitled to a share of the province's natural wealth unless the resource is within its political jurisdiction.

Reyes confirmed an earlier report that President Arroyo had signed the executive order that formalized the Malampaya sharing scheme "but it was never released because of Mayor Hagedorn's protest."

A second round of negotiations initiated mainly by former Energy Secretary Rafael Lotilla reportedly firmed up the inclusion of Puerto Princesa as a direct beneficiary of the funds, a source added.

Hagedorn had lobbied for a direct share for Puerto Princesa, claiming that the Malampaya payments started long before the city became independent and thus it deserved a retroactive share. *Redempto Anda, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

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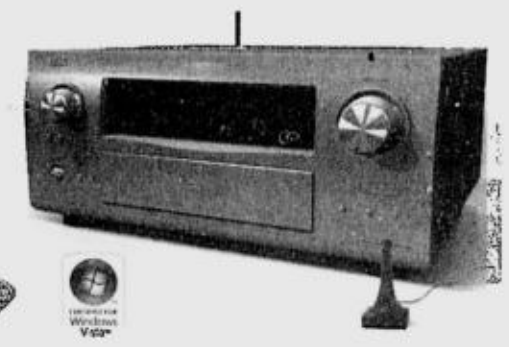

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'Foster Child' wins in France

FILIPINO FILMMAKER BRILLANTE MENdoza's "Foster Child" won the Prize for Fiction at the International Environmental Film Festival, besting entries from Australia, Spain, Russia, Iran and Turkey.

The environmental film festival ran in Paris, France, from Nov. 21 to 27.

Mendoza, who attended the Entrevues Film Festival in France, was already at the airport when he learned of his film's triumph.

"French distributor Ad Vitam's Emmelie Gree informed me [about winning] by calling me on my cell phone. I was just about to board the plane then," Mendoza told the INQUIRER via SMS.

Mendoza is scheduled to arrive in Manila today (Friday).

The film stars Cherry Pie Picache as a surrogate mother who takes care of abandoned or orphaned children for P1,500 a month in line with a government program.

"It's a great bonus," Mendoza said of his film's latest award.

It is the third international trophy for the film, according to Picache's manager Ed Instrella. It previously won the Best Actress award for Picache at the Osians Cinefan Film Festival in New Delhi and the Special Jury Prize at the Eurasia Film Festival in Kazakhstan.

"More than the international recognition, for me, what is more important is that I'm happy with my work," Mendoza pointed out.

The film's producer, Robbie Tan of Seiko, echoed Mendoza's sentiments.

"These international recognitions inspire me to keep producing more significant films even if they are not financially rewarding," Tan explained via SMS. "I feel so good that Filipino films are alive abroad whereas Philippine cinema is like a dead man walking in the country." *Bayani San Diego*

5 soldiers, 4 Moro rebs slain in Sulu clash

ZAMBOANGA CITY—FIVE SOLDIERS AND four Moro rebels were killed while at least 15 others were wounded during separate clashes in Kalinggalang Caluang, Sulu yesterday, according to military reports.

Maj. Gen. Nelson Allaga, Western Mindanao Command chief told the INQUIRER soldiers of the 2nd Marine Brigade clashed with the combined forces of the Abu Sayyaf and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) in the villages of Pandang-pandang and Kambing early yesterday.

He said the first clash occurred in Pandang-pandang around 5 a.m. when the Marines, who were conducting operations in a remote village, chanced upon the group of MNLF Commander Habier Malik.

Detained ranking officials

Malik led the group which detained several ranking government and military officials earlier this year. Allaga said Malik's group merged with the Abu Sayyaf group in the area.

Allaga said that when Malik's group retreated, the Marines followed them until they caught up with them in Kambing Village.

Four gunmen were killed during the clashes, according to Col. Cesario Atienza, commander of the 2nd Marine Brigade based in Sulu.

Atienza said the cadavers of the slain gunmen were recovered along with several high-powered firearms, medicines and camouflage uniforms.

He identified three of the slain MNLF gunmen as Commander Maddang Bairulla, Bamher Abdulhalik, a close aide of Malik, and Hashim Ibba.

Atienza said several MNLF and Abu Sayyaf gunmen were also injured in the clashes.

"Based on intelligence report, Malik and six others were also wounded," he said.

Intelligence report

"We suffered five dead and eight wounded but only one of the eight injured soldiers suffered multiple gunshot wounds, the rest have slight injuries only," Atienza said.

Atienza said mopping-up operations were being conducted as of press time.

Meanwhile, unidentified armed men ambushed a truck loaded with copra in Isabela City in Basilan around 11 a.m. yesterday, killing one person and wounding two others.

Col. Noel Coballes, commander of the Army's 105th Infantry Brigade based in Basilan, identified the victim as Benjamin Siglos, manager of a local agricultural company.

Wounded were Julio Sagoso, the truck driver and security escort Romilio Carpio.

Coballes said investigations were still being conducted to determine the perpetrators and the motive behind the ambush.

Julie S. Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao

SC clears rich PW exec

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE SUPREME COURT HAS REversed an Ombudsman decision dismissing a public works official for unexplained wealth, saying the official's properties appear to have been properly acquired.

The tribunal also restored the retirement benefits of Salvador Pleyto, a former undersecretary of the Department of Public Works and Highways, who served the government for 41 years.

But it found Pleyto negligent for the inaccuracies in his statement of asset, liabilities and net worth (SALN) for 2002, and ordered the forfeiture of the equivalent of six months' pay, which is to be deducted from his retirement benefits.

The Philippine National Police's Criminal Investigation and Detection Group filed an administrative complaint against Pleyto, saying the assets of his and his family appeared to have been illegally acquired because their value was disproportionate to his salary.

The PNP also said that aside from having numerous properties, the Pleyto family also took frequent trips abroad from 1993 to 2002, and that not all of the assets of Pleyto's wife were declared.

Based on the police complaint, the Ombudsman dismissed Pleyto from service for grave misconduct and dishonesty. Pleyto appealed the dismissal with the Court of Appeals, and then the Supreme Court.

The high court issued a temporary restraining order against Pleyto's dismissal while his petition was pending. Before the issue could be resolved, however, Pleyto had retired from the service.

Not enough evidence

In its Nov. 23 decision, the high court said there was not enough evidence to support the complaint. And while it commended the efforts of the police and the Office of the Ombudsman to prosecute officials found to have amassed unexplained wealth, the high tribunal said it could not "countenance unsubstantiated charges against a hapless public official just to send a message that the government is serious in its campaign against graft and corruption."

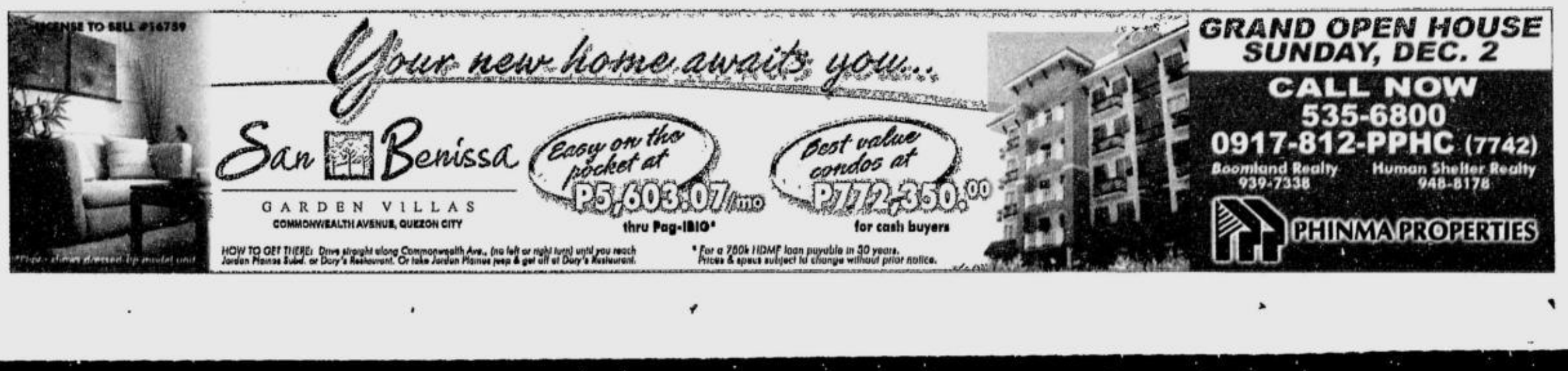
The PNP and the Ombudsman should do well to remember that "good intentions do not win cases, evidence does," the court said.

According to the high court, Pleyto was able to present clear records showing how he and his wife were able to acquire their assets through their businesses, and not just using his salary as a government official.

"In sum, this Court finds substantial evidence that petitioner and his wife have lawful sources of income other than petitioner's salary as a government official that enabled them to acquire several real properties in their names and travel abroad," it said.

As for the Pleyto couple's 26 foreign trips abroad, the high court said these were made by two people in a span of nine years.

It said the frequency of foreign travel was by itself not proof of unexplained wealth. It was vital to show that such trips are beyond an official's financial capacity in light of his salary and other sources of income.



Gen. Calimlim, Subic antismuggling chief, dies; 62

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—Retired Lt. Gen. Jose Calimlim, the senior deputy administrator for operations of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, celebrated his 62nd birthday on Thursday in his hospital bed at the Cardinal Santos Medical Center.

"Apparently [Calimlim] just wanted the nurses to be happy so he threw a party for them while he was on his respirator," said Alex Allan, Calimlim's public relations officer.

At 8:40 a.m. Friday, Calimlim died of multiple organ failure, said Allan, citing reports from the official's doctors.

He said Calimlim's remains would be taken to Camp Aguinaldo and to his hometown of Mapandan, Pangasinan. On Monday, his body would be taken to this freeport for a three-day wake.

Another wake would be held in Camp Aguinaldo on Wednesday before Calimlim is buried at the Libingan ng mga Bayani on Dec. 7.

Calimlim, a member of the Philippine Military Academy Class 1968, was considered as one of the most powerful men at the SBMA on account of his past roles—former chief of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, former AFP vice chief of staff, erstwhile head of the anti-smuggling Task Force Aduana and chief of the anti-smuggling Task Force Subic.

Calimlim also served as commander of the Presidential Security Group.

Asked about Calimlim's illness, Allan said the official was hospitalized for "severe stress."

Allan did not confirm that Calimlim had liver cancer and underwent surgery in China in June this year, reports that circulated in the freeport when he went on medical leave.

"We weren't sure of that," Allan said. *Ansbert Joaquin, Inquirer Central Luzon*

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MANILA PEN CAPER

Elsewhere, loyal gov't troops choked off support for Trillanes

By the Inquirer Bureaus

WHILE REBEL SOLDIERS WERE calling for "people power" during the Manila Peninsula siege, President Macapagal-Arroyo was quietly consolidating her forces—military, police and civilian—around the country to choke off support for the rebel group.

Thursday's siege led by Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV and Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim ended after the group failed to gain public support.

At its height, Maj. Gen. Rodrigo Maclang, chief of the Northern Luzon Command, erected checkpoints on main roads in the Ilocos, Cagayan Valley, Cordillera and Central Luzon.

"We are prepared for any eventuality," Maclang said from Camp Aquino in Tarlac City.

He said the First Scout Ranger Regiment camp in Bulacan was under watch but there was "no report of unauthorized movements."

Lim was the former commander of the Scout Rangers who were involved in previous coup attempts.

Chief Supt. Errol Pan, Regional Police chief, said checkpoints were set up all over Central Luzon to preempt the movement of forces "sympathetic" to Trillanes.

Movements of militant groups in Central Luzon were also monitored, police said.

At the 7th Infantry Division in Fort Magsaysay, soldiers were placed on standby for any request for government reinforcements from Metro Manila.

Maj. Gen. Melchor Dilodilo, commander of the 5th Infantry Division in Cagayan Valley, said his command remained "intact and loyal" to the Constitution.

For his part, Chief Supt. Ameto Tolentino, Cagayan Valley police director, ordered a "physical accounting of policemen" to check any troop movement.

In the Ilocos, Chief Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil, regional police director, told his men not to be distracted by the incident in Makati.

The Philippine Military Academy in Baguio maintained a business-as-usual stance.

Capt. Arlene Orejana-Trillanes, the senator's wife and a member of PMA corps of professors, filed a leave of absence on the day of the siege.

But the leave was meant for the long weekend—Friday being Bonifacio Day—"so I hope no one makes the wrong conclusions," said Maj. Gen. Leopoldo Maligalig, PMA superintendent.

"She is level-headed. She told me as she [had always said] that she has nothing to do with her husband's [political decisions]," Maligalig said. "Her focus is family and I believe her."

Call from GMA

Orejana-Trillanes was one of the seven women cadets who graduated from the PMA in 1997. Her husband belongs to Class 1995.

Maligalig reminded cadets about their oath as professional military officers.

"If you want to join politics, you have to remove those uniforms," he told them.

Ms Arroyo called Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte in what appeared like a loyalty check of her men.

Duterte told reporters that Ms Arroyo sounded relax when she asked him: "Rody, do I still have your support?"

"I told her: Yes Ma'am," Duterte said.

Duterte said that he respected the sentiments of Trillanes and his group but that "assuming his cause is righteous, there is no need to drag the country into the mess."

In Cagayan de Oro City, the League of Cities of the Philippines denounced the act of "destabilization" and said in a statement: "This political unrest would only plunge our nation once more into economic instability."

At the Southern Luzon Command, the gate of Camp Nakar in Lucena was immediately closed.

After a hurried roll call, Army Col. Amador Tabuga Jr., acting Solcom chief of staff, told soldiers that whatever was happening in Makati should be best left for the country's political leaders to resolve.

Some Solcom officials said calls for soldiers to bring down Ms Arroyo had been going on since Tuesday.

"But there were no takers here," said one official who requested anonymity.

Police and Army operatives in Bicol teamed up to monitor any troop movements following intelligence reports that there were Magdalo members in San Fernando, Tigaon, and Naga City in Camarines Sur.

Police Senior Supt. Balligi Agnanayon Tira said the group's "recruitment campaign" in Bicol had failed.

'No Magdalos here'

At the Western Command in Puerto Princesa City, Wescom Commander Ruperto Rico Borromeo said: "We are not at all affected in Palawan...*Wala nang Magdalo supporter dito* (There are no more Magdalo supporters here)."

Top police and military officials in the Visayas sought to allay public fears of another coup d'etat.

Central Command chief Maj. Gen. Victor Ibrado said a loyalty check showed no reports of anyone sympathetic to the Magdalo group.

Maj. Gen. Armando Cunanan, commanding general of the 8th Infantry Division on Samar, and Chief Supt. Abner Cabalquinto, Eastern Visayas regional police director, said everything was normal in the region.

Military and police unit commanders were also directed to monitor units of the Scout Ranger Regiment in Bohol and Negros Island.

Special forces

Supt. Nilo Donaire, PNP Southern Leyte provincial director, said his men watched the Liloan ferry terminal, the gateway to the south, "for possible movements coming Mindanao."

Col. Noel Coballes, commander of the 105th Army Brigade handling the special forces in Basilan, said the Makati siege would not get the support of his troops.

"We are focussed in our work here," said Coballes, adding he and his men were surprised ("*nabigla*") at what happened in Makati.

In Cagayan de Oro City, Maj. Samuel Sagun, spokesperson of the 4th Infantry Division, said it would not take part in any mutinous action.

"We are preoccupied with serving the people, not politics," he said.

Reports from Tonette Orejas, Carmela Reyes and Anselmo Roque, Inquirer Central Luzon, Villamor Visaya Jr., Vincent Cabreza, Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, Cristina Arzadon and Gabriel Cardinoza, Inquirer Northern Luzon; Romulo O. Ponte, Geraldford Ticke, Redempto Anda, Juan Escandor, Delfin T. Mallari Jr., Ephraim Aguilar and Bobby Labalan, Inquirer Southern Luzon; Joey A. Gabieta, Kit Bagaipo, Alex Pal, Carla P. Gomez, Jolene Bulambot, Nestor P. Burgos Jr., Jani Arnaiz and Rachel Arnaiz, Inquirer Visayas; Dennis Jay C. Santos, Julie S. Alipala, Ferdinand O. Zuasola, Ma. Cecilia Rodriguez, Joselle dR. Badilla, Jeffrey M. Tupas and Ma. Cecilia Rodriguez, Inquirer Mindanao

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Another Batasan blast victim dies

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE POWERFUL BLAST SUPposedly intended only for the late Basilan Rep. Wahab Akbar at the Batasan Complex has claimed the life of another victim.

Dennis Manila, a member of Rep. Henry Pryde Teves' staff, died yesterday at the St. Luke's Medical Center in Quezon City, bringing to five the number of fatalities in the explosion at the Batasan's south-wing lobby on Nov. 13.

Marge Bustillo, an admitting assistant of the hospital, confirmed that Manila had died, but refused to give more details.

Former Negros Oriental Rep. Herminio Teves said Manila was still alive when he visited him the other night.

Iloilo Rep. Janette Garin, a doctor who assisted victims after the blast, said Manila had lost a leg because of the explosion. She said Manila, like the four other fatalities, suffered severe burns.

They were Akbar, his aide Julasiri Hayudini, Marcial Taldo, and Maan Bustaliño. Taldo was the driver of Gabriela Rep. Luzviminda Ilagan, who was also injured in the blast, while Bustaliño worked for Representative Teves.

Teves, who sustained severe burns and fractures, is still confined at St. Luke's.

Police have arrested at least three suspects who allegedly carried out an order to assassinate Akbar.

What was Trillanes thinking?

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From page A1

his group walked out of a Makati court hearing and holed themselves up at the Manila Peninsula hotel.

"With all honesty, I didn't know about it," said Seneres, who is facing rebellion charges for allegedly trying to overthrow the Arroyo administration. "Actually, I felt bad that they never told me that there was such a plan."

Soliman, among the Cabinet officials who quit the Arroyo administration in 2005 and demanded her resignation, said she was convinced Trillanes' action was still largely spontaneous.

Wasted effort

"It's a desperate move from someone so frustrated," she said "The insults we get from the government every day are just too much."

Cortez, chair of the anti-Arroyo National Council of Concerned Volunteers, said: "The effort was somehow wasted because it was not coordinated."

LONG TIME NO SEE: But there was the well-known relentless Arroyo critic Linda Montayre not far from the action at the Peninsula. The self-styled president of the Philippine Consultative Assembly was busy texting on four cell phones and networking with anyone who cared to listen. ARLYN DE LA CRUZ

Soliman said Trillanes was naturally frustrated because he still could not sit in the Senate despite the 11 million people who voted him into office.

She said she heard about "restiveness" in the military about two weeks ago but there were no specific details.

"The main reason we weren't there (in Makati) was because we didn't know what it was all about," she said.

But Trillanes was not entirely a loser in Soliman's book.

"He accomplished something by again bringing home the point that people can get desperate and that desperation has very dire consequences for the nation," she said.

"Today, it's Trillanes. Tomorrow, it will be someone else."

Political naivete

Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo said it was political naivete on the part of Trillanes and Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim to carry out the siege without broad support from the people.

"They may have had the wrong impression that making a call to people would draw a quick response. People power requires organized groups, as experience has shown," Ocampo said.

Linda Montayre, a well-known Arroyo critic and president of the People's Consultative Assemby (PCA), sounded like she knew what the Makati siege was all about.

At the height of the standoff, Montayre was just a few steps away from the Makati Avenue entrance of the hotel and busy with text messages and calls on her four mobile phones.

'Other groups will come'

"This is just the start, other groups will come out, *maghintay lang kayo* (Just wait)!" she said in an on-camera interview.

Montayre even told passersby that a "new Philippines and a new leadership will emerge soon in Malacañang" and that Ms Arroyo would soon be "kicked out of the Palace."

With Montayre were a handful of civilian supporters chanting "Resign Gloria, resign," and distributing leaflets and pocket posters of Trillanes.

Another Arroyo detractor, Linggoy Alcuaz, was at the foot of the Ninoy Aquino statue talking to other reporters while surrounded by another small group of supporters shouting "Gloria resign!"

Montayre claimed that aside from the Magdalo hardcore group led by Trillanes, two more groups within the Armed Forces would "take action any time, any minute soon."

Montayre named the two groups as "Sons of Bonifacio" and "Magdiwang."

The first group is led by a senior, "decorated" and active officer, Montayre further claimed, without naming him.

"Magdiwang," she said, is led by a certain Capt. Noel Gabay. Asked if that was a real name or just a pseudonym, Montayre said: "That's how I know him. He is an active military officer."

Erap not part of it

Montayre said what happened at the Peninsula was something that was planned, supposedly a culmination of a series of meetings.

The PCA, Sons of Bonifacio, Magdiwang and Magdalo—so said Montayre—are just among the many groups under the Filipino Democratic Nationalist Reforms, or FDNR.

Asked if any political figure, like former President Joseph Estrada, was connected to FDNR, Montayre said Estrada was not aware of the plan.

"*Kapag alam niya, nabubulilyaso at saka may kasunduan na yan sa Malacañang, hindi siya kasali dito at ayaw naming siyang kasali dito* (Plans go away when he gets to know about them. Besides, he has a deal with Malacañang. He is not part of this and we don't want him to be part of this)."

Last chance

"*Matagal na itong pinag-usapan kaya bilang na ang oras ng pangulo* (This has long been discussed that's why the President's hours are numbered)," Montayre went on.

Asked where the Magdiwang and the Sons of Bonifacio groups would come, she said: "They will come out, they have to come out, this is the last chance."

But no one came.

By the time police started making arrests inside the Peninsula, Montayre was no longer in sight. *With a report from T.J Burgonio*

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GMA off to Europe tonight

JUST TWO DAYS AFTER CRUSHING AN UPrising of renegade soldiers, President Macapagal-Arroyo leaves tonight for Europe, confident that any residual threats to her six-year administration had been wiped out.

Her eight-day trip, which will take her to Spain and the United Kingdom, and a private visit to France, will be highlighted by an audience with Queen Elizabeth II at the Buckingham Palace in London on Dec. 6.

While Vice President Noli de Castro is the de facto caretaker of the government whenever the Chief Executive goes abroad, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita has been tasked by Ms Arroyo to oversee the day-to-day operations in the Palace.

Ermita will be aided by Presidential Management Staff Chief Cerge Remonde and members of the Cabinet who are not traveling with the President.

The President will have a large delegation composed of congressional officials, Cabinet members led by Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye, Trade Secretary Peter Favila and Agriculture Secretary Arthur Defensor, and top Filipino-Chinese businessmen.

At presstime, Malacañang's Foreign Visits Office and Protocol Office had not made public the delegation list. Even the President's departure statement, which is usually issued ahead of the trip, was not made available yesterday.

A Malacañang official, who was not authorized to speak on the matter, told the INQUIRER that "so many" government officials led by House members has lobbied to be included in the trip.

Large official delegation

The official said Ambassador Marciano Paynor, chief presidential protocol, had to trim down the list on Thursday, after Malacañang gave a green light to proceed with the trip. "We have a very large official and business delegation," said the official, quoting Paynor.

To prove that President Arroyo was confident that she would crush the uprising, Bunye said the trip would push through.

"That's s how confident we are," he said.

Ms Arroyo's party will leave just before midnight tonight (Saturday) on a Philippine Airlines Airbus 340 for a 15-hour flight to France.

The President and select members of her delegation will spend their Sunday in Lourdes, hearing Mass at the Chapele de la Reconciliation before embarking on her state and official visits to Spain and UK, respectively.

Her party will promptly depart for Madrid after lunch, arriving in the Spanish capital at 4 p.m. The following day, she will meet with Spanish senators before attending a private lunch hosted by King Carlos I and Queen Sofia at the Palacio de el Pardo.

The President is also scheduled to meet a host of Spanish officials led by Spanish President Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero, businessmen and, the Filipino community.

Ms Arroyo will depart for London on Wednesday. Besides meeting the Queen, she will touch base with steel magnate Lakshmi Mittal.

Mittal is the president and chief operating officer of Arcelor Mittal, the combination of the world's No. 1 and No. 2 steel companies, Arcelor and Mittal Steel.

Michael Lim Ubac

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Saturday, December 1, 2007
34th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Dn 7:15-27
Gospel: Luke 21:34-36

Jesus said to his disciples, "Be on your guard; let not your hearts be weighed down with a life of pleasure, drunkenness and worldly cares, lest that day catch you suddenly as a trap. For it will come upon all the inhabitants of the whole earth. But watch at all times and pray, that you may be able to escape all that is bound to happen and to stand before the Son of Man."

Commentary

This is the last day of the liturgical year 2007. Daniel is given visions that fill him with anguish and fear for his people who sought to be faithful and were persecuted until the Ancient One arrived and judgment was pronounced in favor of those who remained holy. He tells of the vision of his time and the vision whenever those who belong to God remain holy. They are given over to God and not to history, and a reckoning happens. And his vision speaks of the last judgment and the time when all the earth will be held in the scales of justice and there will be the last break with the powers that ruled this world-often in opposition to God's justice and merciful forgiveness and life. Jesus warns us, "Do not get caught up in the day to day cares of living in the world." We live, but we live in God's time too and we must pray to stay attentive to God's day and God's presence. The Son of Man will come in glory; he comes in the poor and the crucified daily. The Son of Man is always coming. Are we ready to stand secure before the Son of Man?

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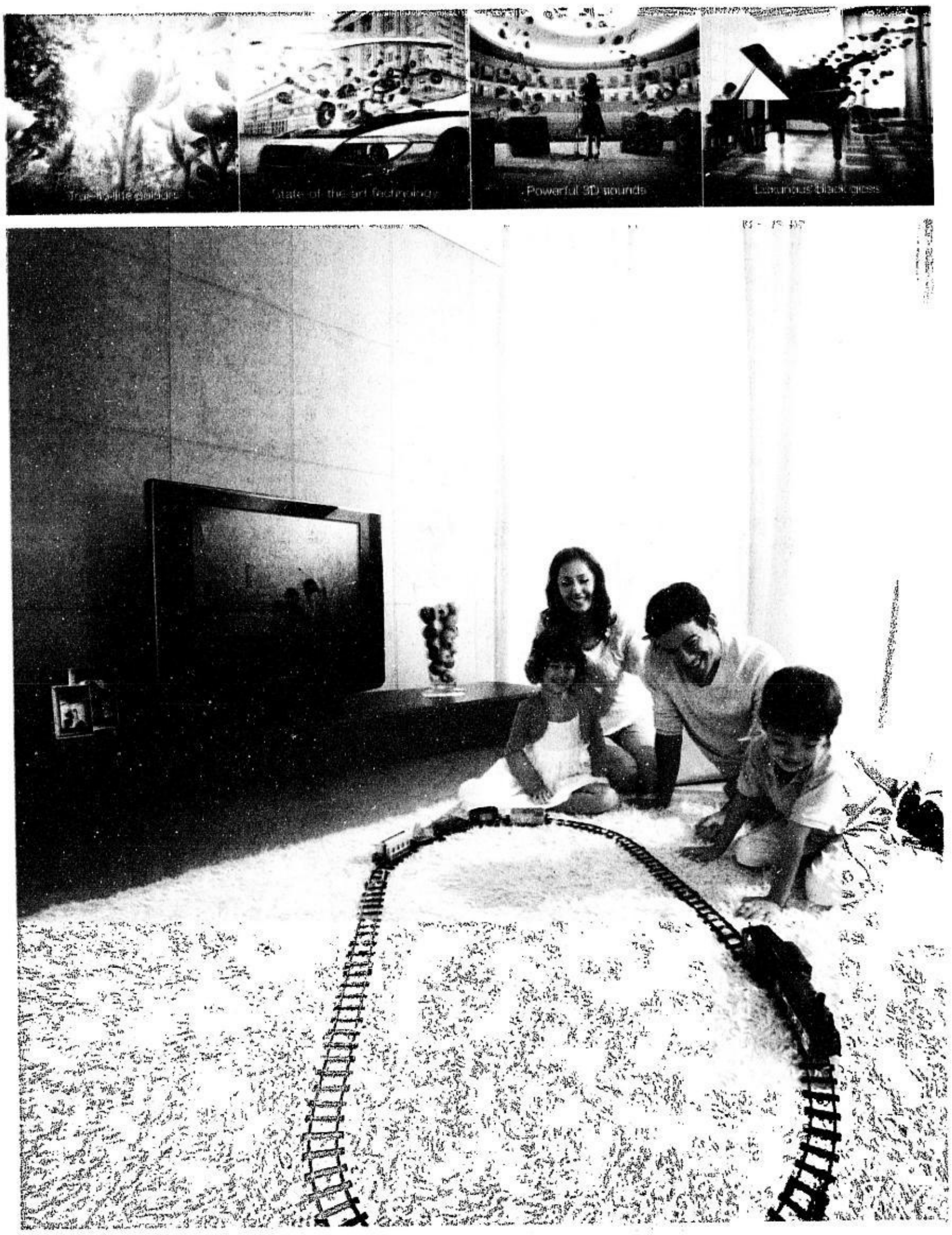


Rebellion charges set vs Trillanes, et al.

From page A1

inquest and/or preliminary investigation. He said his recommendation was that "the basis of the investigation be anchored on the case of rebellion or inciting to rebellion."

"The investigation is based on the premise that a crime of rebellion and inciting to rebellion has been committed," Gonzalez said in a phone interview.

He said it was "clear" that the "ingredients" of the crime were present in the hotel siege.

List of detainees
(Provided by PNP)

1. Former Vice Pres. Teofisto Guingona Jr.
2. Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV y Fuentes
3. Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim y dela Paz
4. Bishop Julio Labayen
5. Rev. Father Robert P. Reyes
6. Atty. J.V. Bautista
7. Atty. Argee Guevarra
8. Herman T. Laurel
9. Leonildo Toledo Jr.
10. Evangeline Gatdula Mendoza
11. Jose A. Albert
12. Eduardo R. Castro
13. Ferdinand Sandoval
14. Myrna H. Buendia
15. Julio Ancheta
16. Estrella Guingona
17. Dominador Ireneo Rull Jr.
18. Maamor D. Lanto
19. Julius Mesa y Julliza
20. 1Lt. Billy Pascua y Salcedo
21. Lt. Andy Torrato y Gebilaguin
22. Ltsg. Manuel Cabochan y de Guzman
23. Lt. Eugene Louie Gonzales
24. Ltsg. James Arandia Layug
25. Romeo Solis y Campato
26. Romeo S. Dacles
27. Capt. Segundino Orfiano y Pidot Jr.
28. Roel Gaduin y Juliano
29. Rhonnmel Rivero y Lorete
30. Francisco Nemenzo
31. Julian Advincula y Lacoste (ret. Navy capt.)
32. Francisco Bosi y Narag
33. Leodor Dela Cruz y Glol
34. Sonny Madarang
35. Cezarl Yassir T. Gonzales
36. Elizabeth Orteza Siguion Reyna
37. Francisco Penaflor
38. Ryan Custodio
39. Atty. Elsid Fajardo
40. Antonio Trillanes III y Fuentes
41. Cpl Clecarte Dahan y Danda
42. Pfc Juanito S. Jilbury
43. 1Lt Jonnel P. Sangalang
44. Capt Garry Alejano y Cajolo
45. Lt JG Arturo Pascua Jr.
46. Pfc Emmanuel Tirador
47. Ens Armand Pontejos y Garrido
48. Pfc German Linde Manuel
49. Edgardo Tulaylay y Viana
50. Rey A. Linaac

"There was an uprising, a demand for President Macapagal-Arroyo to step down, and an attempt to challenge [her] authority and [prevent] her, the Senate and the House of Representatives from performing their constitutional duties," he said.

Explaining the uprising "ingredient," Gonzalez cited the purported presence of arms. He said police had found M16 rifles, pistols and hand grenades in some of the hotel rooms.

But he said the filing of the rebellion charges would be "subject to the results of the inquest and/or preliminary investigation." Inquest proceedings against Trillanes and the others started at Camp Crame last night.

According to Gonzalez, the DOJ prosecutors will start the investigation when the PNP's Criminal Investigation and Detection Group submits to his office its report on the siege.

He said he expected the CIDG to submit its report last night or today.

Gonzalez also said Monday was the earliest the police could transport Trillanes, Lim and the others named in the arrest warrant before Makati Regional Trial Court Judge Oscar Pimentel, to face the contempt charge against them.

He pointed out that with the arrests made on Thursday and yesterday being a holiday, the next working day would be Monday.

Razon said the use of force by the police and military on Thursday was "not overkill" but "a series of graduated responses."

Razon said a combination of shock and "persuasive fire" was used to bring about the "psychological effect" that Trillanes, Lim and the 30 or so members of the Magdalo group were being overwhelmed by a superior force.

Strategy

He said he wanted his troops to show the Magdalo soldiers that there was "no hesitation" on the part of the PNP and the Armed Forces.

NO OVERKILL, PNP Director General Avelino Razon says during a press conference at Camp Crame. It was just for "psychological effect" of a full force committed to take out the Trillanes group, he explains. JOAN BONDOC

Razon said government troops knew that the Magdalo soldiers had brought high-powered firearms and that they were in "sniper positions" on the hotel's mezzanine.

"The sniper positions would have put in danger the officers [assigned to serve the warrants of] arrest. We had to employ [APCs] for the protection of our policemen to ram the main entrance," Razon said.

He said that had police come in without armor or APC protection, they would have been picked off by snipers.

"Our objective was to arrest them. If they resisted, necessary force was employed," he said.

But despite the intent to display superior force, Razon said, tear gas, a nonlethal weapon, was used.

Chief Supt. Samuel Pagdilao, PNP spokesperson and a founder of the elite SAF, echoed Razon's statements.

He said the APCs were used "to provide cover and to ensure the break-in to insert our troops," and that "persuasive shots" were intended to convince the Magdalo soldiers of the government troops' "superior firepower."

Chief Supt. Leocadio Santiago, SAF chief, said he deployed 115 members for the operation. But neither he nor Razon was able to say how many Marines were deployed.

Sincerity

Razon said the PNP had tried to negotiate with Trillanes and company to give up peacefully.

He said a deadline was also set for the surrender, and that Director Geary Barias, chief of the National Capital Region Police Office, "showed sincerity by talking to them himself [instead of sending] a subordinate officer."

Razon said the PNP was working against time to end the standoff before dark:

"It's hard to conduct operations at night. Your perimeter might be not as impenetrable as you would have it. [Also] there might be an augmentation [of the Magdalo forces]. Second, there might be supporters massing outside. *Pwedeng makatakas sila* (The Magdalos could escape). Plus we had the feeling there was a need to restore normalcy. The longer we drag on, the harder it would be to [do that]."

Miriam: Expel Trillanes

THE PNP CHIEF ALSO EXpressed the belief that the Magdalo soldiers had fired back at government troops.

Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago is preparing to ask the Senate to reprimand or even expel Trillanes for his behavior on Thursday.

In a resolution that she plans to submit for action on Monday, Santiago said: "The Senate committee on ethics and privileges should meet immediately and recommend the proper punishment for Senator Trillanes for disorderly behavior and unparliamentary acts and language, including, if necessary, his suspension or expulsion from the Senate."

The ethics committee is chaired by Sen. Pia Cayetano.

Santiago said she believed that Trillanes' acts on Thursday had been planned: "He participated in the reading of a prepared seditious statement calling not only for the President to resign, but also for the public, in effect, to compel her to leave office."

According to Santiago, a staunch ally of Ms Arroyo and who is joining the latter in her trip to London and Spain tonight, Senate rules allow the punishment of any member for disorderly behavior upon the recommendation of the ethics committee, as long as this is concurred in by two-thirds of the members of the chamber.

But she conceded that penalizing Trillanes would be difficult considering that his opposition allies accounted for the majority in the Senate.

Premature

Before the Thursday standoff, Trillanes had been in detention on a coup d'etat charge for his role in the Oakwood mutiny of 2003. He has yet to attend a session at the Senate.

Sen. Pia Cayetano said that while her committee was bound to act on Santiago's resolution, any Senate action on Trillanes would be "premature" because his cases were still pending in the courts.

She cited the case of former Rep. Romeo Jalosjos who was expelled from the House of Representatives only after the Supreme Court had upheld his conviction of rape.

Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. concurred with Cayetano, saying: "Trillanes is innocent of the crimes until he is convicted. He has to be convicted first before he is punished. He should not be prejudged before he is convicted."

Senate President Manuel Villar said his position was that the chamber should tread carefully in disciplining one of its own.

Send clear message

He said he doubted whether Trillanes could be expelled, especially with the opposition in control of the Senate.

But whether the Senate reprimands, suspends or expels Trillanes, Santiago said it was important that it send a clear message to the public that it was not tolerating crimes committed by a senator.

She said some opposition senators who were also lawyers like herself were most likely as "annoyed and offended" by Trillanes' actions.

"Nagdudunung-dunungan kasi (He is feigning intelligence). He is interpreting the Constitution as a layman, which should not be because you need four years to have the skill to interpret it," she said.

'Reming' survivor pins hopes on 4 photographs, wants dialogue with GMA

From page A1

over her and taking a video of her deep gashes and bruises.

The two others are of Ms Arroyo grasping her hands and promising that she and the other typhoon victims will return to their normal lives and a relocation site will be provided "as soon as possible"—as Vice President Noli de Castro looks on.

Forgotten promise

"But the President seems to have forgotten her promise," Samson, 44, told the INQUIRER.

"We have been waiting and waiting, but we are still in the shelter up to now. Is that what she calls 'as soon as possible?' Does it mean a year or two more?"

With P400 in her pocket and the four snapshots in a plastic envelope, Samson left Guinobatan for Manila on Monday night, hoping to seek an audience with Ms Arroyo or any of the other government officials present during that visit on Dec. 3.

But she ended up in the INQUIRER office in Makati City on Tuesday, clueless on how to reach anyone of them.

"I have no idea how to get to our President, but I have these pictures with me as proof that she talked to me on that day and made me a promise," Samson said, her eyes brimming with tears.

Without the pictures, she said, she would not have had the courage to leave her two boys—John Paul, 12, and Alex, 17—at the evacuation center at the "Oval," an open field at the Marcial Rañola High School.

Nightmares

John Paul still gets nightmares of the typhoon, Samson said. "He wakes up in the middle of the night screaming that the floodwaters are in his ears."

She herself can still remember the black torrent that carried her to an electrical tower three kilometers from her home.

The memory remains fresh:

After being tossed and turned by the strong current for two hours, she managed to hold on to the tower and then set out to look for her boys.

Naked and bleeding, she inspected the bodies scattered like dead fish, flipping them over in the course of her search.

Mother and sons were eventually reunited in a hospital.

Samson said she lost her home and her 8-year-old *ukay-ukay* (used clothing) business to Reming.

These days, she occasionally takes in laundry to earn a little money to augment the food subsidy provided by nongovernment organizations.

She cannot get a regular job because she has to look after John Paul, who has yet to fully recover from the tragedy.

Alex, on the other hand, has had to stop schooling.

Dec. 3 phaseout

Samson said the latest news she had received from local social workers was that the Unicef would phase out its food program by Dec. 3.

The agency has been providing each displaced family in Guinobatan half a sack of rice, two kilos of mongo and two liters of cooking oil twice a month.

"I decided to come to Manila even if I have little cash so I could talk to the President, and so that my family and the rest of the typhoon survivors still at the evacuation center will be saved from misery," Samson said.

"It's like we live in dog kennels," she said of the shelters—plywood shanties measuring about eight square meters.

But in her despair, Samson said she thanked God for sparing Guinobatan from Typhoon "Mina," which was initially reported to make landfall in Albay last week but changed course and veered toward northern Luzon.

"If it had not reversed its path, we would have been left homeless again. Our shanties are too weak to survive a strong wind," she said.

368 families

In a phone interview on Thursday, Cristina Asanza, officer in charge of the Municipal Social Welfare Department, said there were still 368 families at the "Oval" awaiting relocation to the nearby village of Mauraro.

PICTURE PERFECT: As Vice President Noli de Castro and ex-presidential chief of staff Mike Defensor look on, President Arroyo clasped the hands of "Reming" victim, Lily Samson, assuring her that she and other victims would be out of the evacuation center to return to their lives "as soon as possible." That was Dec. 3, 2006.

(Early this year, local government officials assured the homeless residents that relocation sites would be made available for them within three months.)

Asanza said the typhoon survivors should not worry because the local government was taking care of them.

She admitted that there had been some delay in developing the relocation site, but said the construction of core shelters was still a priority.

"Most probably, by next week the construction of core shelters by the Department of Social Welfare and Development will start," Asanza said.

But Samson was not too hopeful. She said she visited the relocation site in Mauraro two weeks ago and was disappointed with what she saw.

She said only three units, including a health center, had been completed.

"I am appealing to the President to fulfill her promise to us so we can move on with our lives," she said.

Postcard-perfect

In the town of Daraga, the visitor will find the country scene breathtaking—a small stream with crystal-clear waters, farmers bent to the task of coaxing crop out of the land, majestic Mayon Volcano, with not a cloud covering its glorious cone.

But the postcard-perfect beauty is lost on Jose Romero, executive director of the Alternative Systems for Community Development Foundation Inc. (Ascode), because what he sees is what has remained of what he and 100 or so other families used to call home.

On that fateful day when his village was inundated in about three hours, Romero and his neighbors did not immediately succumb to panic. They thought it was just another typhoon passing through the province.

But when the waters rose rapidly and turned muddy, they fled for their lives.

Romero cheated death because he literally held on to a tree for dear life, as did his 7-year-old son, whom he initially feared he had lost to the flood.

The rest of his family found a safe haven in a nearby four-story house, joining many of his neighbors who were weeping and calling on the lashing rains to stop.

The rains eventually did, and Romero found that his house, along with the rest of the village, had been buried under mud and fallen trees.

All he had left were the clothes on his back and a few hundred pesos stuffed in a small burlap bag.

Still, Romero told the INQUIRER, he counted himself among the lucky ones "because my entire family is safe."

Building homes

Romero and his colleagues in civil society have been at the forefront of efforts to put Albay back on its feet—from search-and-rescue missions to distributing relief goods, and now, building new homes.

In Daraga, the tent villages are largely gone and many displaced families have moved on to halfway houses built by foreign donors and local NGOs or to permanent resettlement sites put up by the local government in cooperation with such groups as Gawad Kalinga (GK), Habitat for Humanity and Coca-Cola Foundation.

GK homes are the most colorful, with red, green or blue single-detached homes properly spaced from each other on one end of the area. Habitat for Humanity and Coca-Cola Foundation favor the duplex style.

Ascode, a member of the Partnership and Access Center-Albay funded by the Peace and Equity Foundation (PEF), is helping families outside the resettlement area—mostly fisherfolk—who decided to stay where they are and build new homes out of indigenous materials.

PEF has also bought a five-hectare property in Daraga where an "eco-village" will be put up for 140 families, 40 of whom will come from the NGO sector.

Anguish

But Romero said that even if people had gotten back on their feet, they were still traumatized and anguished.

"I have one colleague who sleeps with one foot on the floor so he'll know if floodwater has entered his house," he said.

Then there are the children crying at the sound of rain, afraid that they would go through the same harrowing experience again.

Life is infinitely more difficult for those who lost loved ones.

Romero cited the case of a father often seen staring into space, lost in the pain of losing two sons.

The father was actually holding on to a young son, whom he unconsciously dropped when he tried to snatch another son from the raging floodwaters.

In the end, he lost both sons, and has since been grappling with guilt.

Romero said it was not unusual for survivors from Daraga and nearby municipalities to come together, sometimes over bottles of liquor, to talk about Reming.

It is their way of coping with the pain, he said.

Punishment

To Eduardo Barcellano, president of the Panarayon Small Fisherfolk Association, Reming was "punishment" for bad deeds.

He said there used to be a great divide between the haves and have-nots in his town. But when the flood came, rich and poor scrambled for whatever shelter they could find.

"There were 200 of us who found shelter beside this big house. There was no rich and poor then," he said.

But Barcellano, 60, said the Albay folk had become better people because of Reming: "Those who were lazy are now working, and those who used to depend on other people have learned to fend for themselves."

For example, he said, his neighbors had gone back to their farms and were now planting more crops—corn, sweet potato, cassava—to augment their income from selling fish.

"They are now ashamed to just ask for food," he said.

Barcellano said the change in ways was why succeeding typhoons had veered away from Albay.

It may then be a matter of time before the Daraga folk again see the beauty beyond the rubble.

Trillanes offers to pay for damage to the Pen

From page A1

But the luxury hotel will be closed for the weekend as management takes stock of the damage to the premises, including the left main door where a tank had rammed through, and arrange for the transfer of guests to nearby hotels.

Trillanes said his group would pay for the damage his coterie of soldiers and civilian supporters left in their six-hour takeover of the Manila Peninsula.

During the press conference before he was escorted out of the hotel, Trillanes was quick to answer that he would foot the bill. He did not clarify, however, whether this would extend to the damage wrought by the police assault team particularly at the Pen's lobby.

The ornate lobby, with its comfortable lounges and fine linen dinner settings, was one of Manila's main meeting places for business executives, diplomats and those who just wanted to be seen.

Based on the initial assessment made by hotel engineers, the cost of damages could reach six figures, said Mariano Andres Garchitorena, director of public relations of Manila Peninsula.

He also said the hotel had not heard from the group of Trillanes nor his alleged offer to foot the bill.

"Of course, he is welcome to pay, but as of now we have not heard from him or from his representative," Garchitorena said.

Bullet holes on walls

The lobby turned into a virtual war zone as an armored personnel carrier crashed through its main doors while assault teams broke down the windows. The hotel's tables and chairs were also thrashed by the Special Action Force. There were bullet holes on the walls and mirrors while the carpet was scorched. Trillanes' group occupied the Rizal room on the second floor, which also served as his war room, and where sandwiches were served for lunch.

Before the siege, hotel managers had treated Trillanes' takeover as a normal event. "It's just a press conference, everything is under control," said one manager who was still hopeful that Trillanes would leave before the 3 p.m. deadline.

Garchitorena told the INQUIRER that a Palace official had called up David Batchelor, Manila Peninsula general manager, yesterday to express sympathy for Thursday's event.

The official inquired about the safety of the hotel guests, its employees and the progress of the repair work.

Grachitorena declined to reveal the official's identity.

'5-star rebels'

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye, who was interviewed yesterday over government station dzRB, said the "five-star rebels" should pay for the damage at the Manila Peninsula.

Bunye said the law was very clear on who was liable for the damage at the hotel as he referred to the group of Trillanes and Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim as the "five-star rebels."

The press secretary also said that the siege did not only damage hotel facilities but also disrupted business operations.

Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay visited the Manila Peninsula at noon yesterday and asked hotel management how city hall could help in the repair work.

He said he would ask the Department of Finance if the city could grant tax credit or holiday to the hotel.

Who is liable?

Whether the hotel plans to press charges is still the subject of discussion, according to Garchitorena.

"The management has not reached any decision if it will sue or whom to sue because the insurance people are still assessing the extent of the damage," he said.

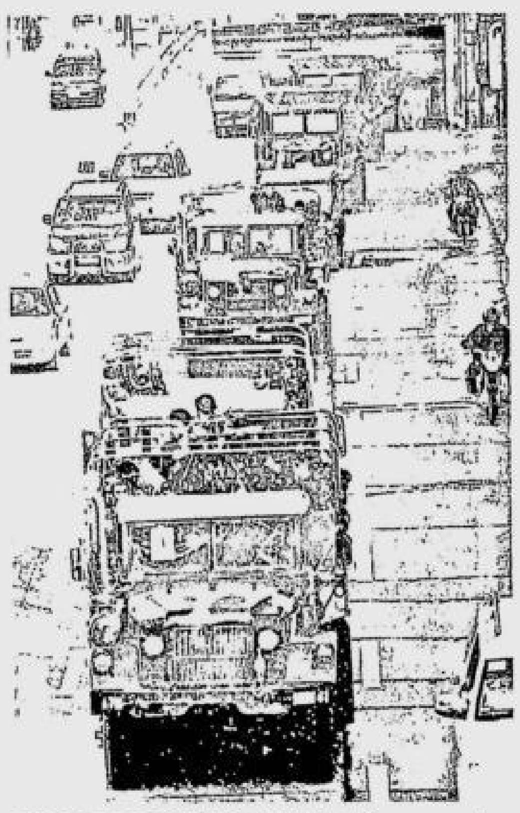
Asked if anyone has offered to pay for the repair work, he said: "We have not received word from any faction—the government forces or the Trillanes group."

Garchitorena, however, remains optimistic. He said hotel operations, including all its restaurants, would resume on Monday afternoon.

"The hotel would reopen on Monday at 3 p.m. as it would only take a weekend to restore the lobby, which is the hotel's centerpiece," he said.

The Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra's annual concert at the hotel lobby on Dec. 8 would also push through, he added.

The doors leading to its grand lobby were destroyed by an armored carrier personnel when police assaulted the hotel to force Trillanes and Lim along with a small group of supporters to surrender.



MORE SHOCK AND AWE: Reinforcements arrive on Friday from the Northern Luzon Command to beef up NCRPO troops for what had been expected to be a big protest rally on National Heroes Day. JOAN BONDOC

Trillanes' group occupied the hotel for six hours after they walked out of a Makati City court room.

Apart from the destroyed door, the main lobby on the ground floor took the brunt of the damage, with chairs and tables, as well as the carpet, needing repair, Garchitorena said.

"There were pockmarked portions of the wall from the shrapnel" and the glass parts of the two front doors and walls were shattered, he said. But "the rooms pretty much were left unscathed."

He said he did not expect the lobby to be fully fixed by Monday's reopening.

No reservations

Garchitorena said Trillanes' group did not make prior reservations. "They asked if they could use one room, and we offered them the Rizal boardroom," he said. (Later, the group also used the adjoining Guerrero function room).

In the hotel's 31 years of operation, Thursday's siege was the first to hit the hotel, he said.

He added that while the hotel was affected by the 1989 coup attempt staged by Sen. Gregorio Honasan against then President Corazon Aquino's government at the Hotel Intercontinental, what happened on Thursday did not come near it.

Guests, many of them foreign, went in and out of the hotel yesterday to retrieve their belongings. Most seemed unaffected by the incident.

Coffee, beer at the lobby

Chris Osentowsky of California, who is here on business, recalled calmly sipping coffee in the lobby while the uniformed Magdalo soldiers, some brandishing machine guns, roamed around.

"I was in Greenbelt when I heard that something was happening in the hotel so I went. I walked past the rebels, ordered coffee and sat in the lobby," he said.

"In the first three or four hours, it was not that tense. It was almost jovial. Everybody was smiling. It was pretty much business as usual," Osentowsky said. He added that he left shortly before the military began its assault.

"I'll come back," said Tim Mahekiss of New York, who is also in the country on business. "I was not at all threatened, just uneasy," he said.

Osentowsky said the hotel did not charge him anything for Thursday. He praised the hotel management for taking care of the guests' transfer, and practically "hand-holding" them till they reached the hotels they moved to.

"They should have served some San Mig Light," he joked.

Most of the guests were transferred to the Makati Shangri-La Hotel, while others moved to Dusit Hotel Nikko or the Hotel Intercontinental.

90 percent occupancy

At the time of the standoff, the hotel had about 90 percent occupancy rate, amounting to some 400 guests. Aside from a scheduled wedding reception, there were five more major events that had to be moved elsewhere, Garchitorena said.

Average room rates at the Peninsula vary from \$120 to \$140 (between P5,000 and P6,000 plus).

Garchitorena said there were no reports from hotel guests of missing valuables so far. *With a report from AFP*

FILE ANYWHERE AND EXTENDED DEADLINE FOR FILING AND PAYMENT OF 3RD CALENDAR QUARTER CORPORATE INCOME TAX FOR TAXPAYERS OF RDOs 47, 48, 49, 50 AND LTDO-MAKATI

The BIR allows the taxpayers of Revenue District Office (RDO) Nos. 47, 48, 49 and 50 and the Large Taxpayers District Office (LTDO) – Makati who will file their 3rd calendar quarter corporate income tax return (1702Q) and pay the taxes due thereon on November 29, 2007 to any Authorized Agent Bank (AAB), whether situated within or outside Makati City, without being penalized for "wrong venue". Further, taxpayers of the aforementioned offices who failed to file and pay on the aforesaid date were likewise given an extension of time to file and pay until Monday, December 3, 2007, without imposition of penalty for late filing and payment.

The 3rd calendar quarter corporate income tax which covers the months of July, August and September of 1997 is due for payment on or before November 29, 2007. Being the last day, all 3rd calendar quarter income tax returns (BIR Form 1702Q) must have been filed and tax payments must have been paid on November 29 of this year. However, due to unavoidable circumstances, the attempted coup d'etat which was staged in Peninsula Hotel in Makati, near the Atrium Building where Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) Revenue District Office (RDO) Nos. 47, 48, 49 and 50 and the Large Taxpayers District Office (LTDO) – Makati are holding their offices, some of the taxpayers were not able to file and pay their returns. Hence, the BIR decided to relax the existing policies on the strict implementation of the jurisdictional venue for filing and payment and extended the deadline to the following working day.

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Razon: Plot is still active

From page A1

"When the Magdalo took over Oakwood, they ringed the area with C4 [explosive]. So our assumption is that they still have the capability to do that," Razon said.

Faeldon and Trillanes were among the leaders of the Oakwood Mutiny in July 2003.

Messianic people

Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. said "Messianic people" within the military were part of the hotel siege, which was led by Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV and former Scout Ranger commander Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim.

Esperon said the military was able to "preempt a sizable" group of officers and enlisted personnel from joining Lim at the Peninsula.

"These are the Messianic people who think they can give solutions to the problems of the country while they cannot even solve the problems of their own (military) units," Esperon said.

The Peninsula siege triggered the imposition of a curfew from Thursday midnight to dawn on Friday. Razon said the curfew would not be reimposed.

The PNP's Directorate for Operations also downgraded the national police's alert status from full to normal alert.

Second time

This was the second time Faeldon had escaped from military detention after being arrested for participating in the Oakwood uprising.

In December 2005, during a court hearing, he escaped from his military guards while in a parking lot. He later taunted the Arroyo administration and the military by posting pictures of himself on the Internet showing him in military camps around the country.

He was rearrested in January 2006 in Malabon City in the company of a military lawyer, Capt. Candelaria Rivas.

Switching loyalties

Razon said the PNP had dispatched tracker teams composed of members of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) and the Intelligence Group (IG). Units of the AFP are also looking for Faeldon, he said.

Razon said the police were also trying to account for the military security escorts of Trillanes and Lim.

"We are trying to account for the security escorts of Trillanes' group that were supposed to secure them but apparently *bumaliktad ang mga ito* (they switched sides)," Razon said.

He said Faeldon might have escaped because of the "confusion" at the hotel.

"*Kung may mga nakipagtulungan sa amin ng mabuti, hindi nakatakas*(If only some people really helped us, they would not have escaped)," he said.

"One of the reasons to restrain some of our friends from the media was that the Magdalo presented themselves as media. It was extremely difficult for us to determine which is which," Razon said.

Posed as mediaman

He said investigators received information that before police assaulted the hotel, Faeldon posed as a member of media, made his way to the lobby and into one of the service bays of the hotel, where he exited and disappeared.

Razon said that at the very least, police were looking for four Magdalao officers "but we believe that there are more than that."

He said police recovered a document from one of the hotel's rooms detailing a plan by four groups composed of a total of 32 people to take over the Peninsula.

The document, written on a plain bond paper in black ink, detailed the members of the four groups and bore codenames or noms de guerre like Gambit, Zorro, Regulasyon, Sniper, Abdul, Tirador, Jojit and Alibata.

The document also detailed the positions the teams were supposed to take and their "points of insertion."

Codenames

Razon said the police were working to identify the persons behind the codenames. He would not say if the codenames were those of people in business or politics.

The PNP Chief said he believed Trillanes' group was one of the four groups.

Since police had not accounted for the three other groups, Razon said the plot to destabilize the government was still "active."

Esperon, for his part, said the military was looking into the possible involvement of some politicians in Thursday's incident but he declined to identify them.

Esperon said recovered documents showed plans by the group to declare a new government.

"What they did is still connected to today's activities," Razon said, adding police had received information a plot to destabilize the government was supposed to be launched during National Heroes Day protests yesterday.

The military chief would not divulge the identities of others involved with the Trillanes group.

50 detained, see list Page A8

Razon said a total of 50 people, including 14 Magdalo soldiers, had been taken into custody. They included former Vice President Teofisto Guingona and Infanta, Quezon Bishop emeritus Julio Labayen.

Upon request by the Catholic Church, Labayen was released yesterday to the custody of Infanta Bishop Rolando Tirona.

Police recovered firearms and a hand grenade from rooms in the hotel.

Razon also said the police were looking into any links of militant groups to Trillanes and their involvement, if any, in Thursday's siege.

Razon confirmed reports that residents of Tondo, Manila, had been recruited for P200 to join a rally in support of Trillanes.

Esperon admitted that had Trillanes group succeeded in its plan, it could have been a "major source of embarrassment and a major source of threat" to the military.

Facing East

When reporters asked if the officers detained in Tanay, Rizal, were part of Thursday's incident, Esperon smiled and said: "Sort of. *Nakaharap ako ngayon duon* (I am facing in their direction now)."

Esperon, as he spoke, was facing east, where Camp Capinpin in Tanay, Rizal, is located.

Lim, Marine Col. Ariel Querubin, former Marine commandant Maj. Gen. Renato Miranda, and seven other Marine officials and 18 Scout Ranger officers have been detained in Tanay for more than a year after they were tagged as leaders of a failed attempt to overthrow the government in February last year.

Esperon said the military would "hit" Lim with more charges.

"*Napakarami nilang kasalanan* (They committed so many offenses)," Esperon said.

Fate of Faeldon

Esperon also said that even if there were four military teams from the Magdalo group of junior officers that joined Trillanes and Lim at the Manila Peninsula, a "loyalty check" within the AFP was not necessary.

"The Armed Forces is solid," he said.

Referring to Faeldon, Esperon said: "The manhunt is on. He has done it before. We hope we can make a repeat of the rearrest of Faeldon."

Faeldon's lawyer, Trixie Cruz-Angeles, urged the military "to observe and respect Capt. Faeldon's human rights if he is currently in their custody."

"After he had been interviewed en route to the hotel and at the hotel, he has not been heard of since. He was not among the accused arrested at the hotel, and he is not in his detention quarters in Fort Bonifacio. He had last informed his counsel that he was returning to the Marine brig," Angeles said in a statement sent to reporters.

Angeles said the lack of information about Faeldon was "worrisome for his family and friends".

"We therefore ask that the PNP or AFP release any and all information that they may have on Capt. Faeldon's whereabouts."

FLOORED: After their surrender, Magdalo soldiers are handcuffed and ordered to get down at the Peninsula lobby while they wait to be transported to Camp Bagong Diwa in Bicutan. RAFFY LERMA

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From page A1

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they can just say so. But we don't want that to happen because they are our friends," he said.

The PNP chief also said the police had allowed the media to do their job, and the latter should extend the same courtesy:

"We can understand the purpose of the media. Why can't they understand the purpose of the police when they performed their duty? Some media can't understand that. *Pinalalaki pa ang istoryang ito* (They're making a big thing out of this)."

Razon acknowledged that the media was more often than not first at the scene, beating out the police. He said he himself relied on the media in critical situations.

For smoother system

"We have no problems with that," he said. "But our concern is that when we arrive at the scene, it's our turn to work. In our job, we need to protect the welfare of everyone so that there will be no collateral damage."

He added that there was no effort on the part of the PNP to crack down on the media.

Razon said he had directed the PNP's Directorate for Police Community Relations and Public Information Office to coordinate with the Kapisanan ng Brodkaster ng Pilipinas and other media groups to hold a meeting to discuss future coverage of similar events.

"We want to discuss these problems with the objective to resolve them, so that we will have a smoother system and so that problems won't arise in the future," he said.

Not at war

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said President Macapagal-Arroyo herself had reminded her officials that her administration was "not at war with the media."

Gonzalez said Ms Arroyo had met with the Cabinet national security cluster to discuss the Thursday standoff at the Manila Peninsula and the roundup of the reporters and cameramen who covered it, and issued a "guideline."

"We should be very, very circumspect when it comes to the media and we're not at war with the media," he quoted Ms Arroyo as saying.

Asked why Ms Arroyo had issued the reminder, Gonzalez said: "She was just trying to emphasize that you must handle these things properly."

He said Ms Arroyo might have conveyed the reminder because, as Cabinet officials had observed, "the Trillanes caper was sidelined" by the report on the way the members of the media were handled by the police and military.

Gonzalez stressed that the hotel takeover of Trillanes and company was "the real event."

"Had it succeeded, it could have changed the course of history," he said.

In disguise

In a phone interview, Ressa said she understood the challenges faced by the police, who had tried to justify the arrests of journalists by saying that some of Trillanes' supporters could have disguised themselves as members of the media in an attempt to escape.

"But they could have done the processing [of the journalists] there. They only need to call the media organizations; we could have sent our heads on the site to do the verification," Ressa said.

But Armed Forces Chief of staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon hinted at a possible connivance between some journalists and Trillanes' group.

Connivance

In an interview with reporters at Camp Aguinaldo yesterday, Esperon was asked what could have been the scenario had the journalists left Trillanes and company at the Manila Peninsula.

He replied: "That will have to be looked at separately because from what we are seeing, it looked like there was a media setup there even before the incident. Did you see the cables there? Aren't those cables of TV stations?"

Chilling effect

Asked if he thought there was connivance between the media and Trillanes' group, Esperon said: "You call that connivance? I do not know, but they had good coverage. But certainly we will look into it."

Esperon also said the journalists' refusal to vacate the hotel despite the authorities' request would also be looked into because they "blocked the enforcement of the law."

"We are not prohibiting you from covering all these things. But I hope that if we have a request for order in the coverage, you will not go in the middle of things because we don't want you to get hurt," he said.

Legal assistance

A group of human rights lawyers condemned the arrest of the journalists and offered assistance in filing legal suits.

"The media people were exercising not only their profession but also their constitutional right to freedom of expression and of speech, or press freedom," the National Union of People's Lawyers (NUPL), chaired by human rights lawyer Romeo Capulong, said in a statement.

According to NUPL secretary general Neri Colmenares, an "invitation" which cannot be refused is a restriction to liberty and is, therefore, an actual arrest.

"The arrest was meant to instill a chilling effect on the media and curtail the people's right to be informed," Colmenares said.

Rep. Teodoro Casiño of the party-list group Bayan Muna said there was no way the administration could justify the arrests.

"All the excuses by Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro and the Philippine National Police cannot justify the arrest of the media. The arrest of more than 50 journalists is a blatant attack on press freedom and the people's right to know," Casiño said.

"This sets a dangerous precedent that aims to prevent the media from effectively doing their job of bringing the unadulterated truth to the public," he added.

Even Ms Arroyo's allies in the House said there might have been excesses in the way the journalists were rounded up.

Manila Rep. Bienvenido Abante told the INQUIRER he would file on Monday a resolution calling for an inquiry into the matter by his committee on public information and the committee on public order and security.

Asked if he thought restraining journalists would have a chilling effect on them, Abante said: "Definitely."

Albay Rep. Edcel Lagman, chair of the House committee on appropriation and a human rights advocate, said cuffing the journalists was "uncalled for" if all the police intended was to question them on their identities.

"That was over-extending the reaction," Lagman said. ***With reports from Nikko Dizon, Christine O. Avendaño and Norman Bordadora***

Journalists cracked jokes as they waited for attack

From page A1

team would finally break into the hotel. Some of the more experienced journalists who ignored earlier police orders to leave the Peninsula knew, as though by instinct, what to expect.

Going for the curtains

Those who had lingered at the lobby began tearing up table cloths. Some went for the curtains while another managed to find some in-house towels. Other just got their hankies ready. All scampered to look for water.

"What's that for?" a young newspaper reporter asked a senior male colleague from radio.

"Tear gas," he said. "In five minutes or so they will be barging in."

Covering the eyes with wet cloth, as any veteran in the coverage of protest rallies would know, provides the first defense against the sting of tear gas.

Typical in a big-event coverage, tense lulls would give way to lighthearted moments among press people. At the Peninsula that day, somebody was always breaking the ice despite the impending attack and a little black humor was welcome.

"It's been nice knowing you," one broadsheet reporter said to another in mock farewell.

"Picture! picture!" said a female reporter from a news website, inviting anyone for a souvenir photo before the place gets pounded by a hail of bullets (and hopefully after).

Deathly silence

But moments before the attack, the lobby actually came to a deathly silence, according to one account. Most of the journalists by then were still roaming around this area. Some cameramen asked their buddies for cigarettes apparently to help calm their nerves.

The Magdalo soldiers, at this point, were all gathered on the second floor. One of them was heard telling journalists to "expect" a tear gas attack.

"This is typical shock and awe," another rebel soldier later remarked after hearing the first warning shots.

The initially harmless volleys became a strafing sweep shattering the glass doors and peppering the interior of the lobby.

By the time the smoke of tear gas began permeating the lobby, a patch of carpet had caught fire. This was a few minutes past 5 p.m.

Strange tableau

An armored personnel carrier suddenly broke in—and instantly figured in an odd tableau. It stopped right beside the lobby's giant Christmas tree.

Heavily armed cops in gas masks began darting from behind the APC and made their way up the staircase leading to the second-floor wing where Trillanes and his group—along with most of the trapped journalists—had retreated.

One of the raiders was heard shouting at a news crew: "*Labas na kayo* (Get out of here)!" Cameramen raised their equipment for the assault team to see as proof they were not the target.

The "gas" forced some of the Magdalo soldiers, then positioned on the second-floor hallway, to further retreat into a narrower corridor leading to the Rizal boardroom, where Trillanes had set up a command post at the start of the six-hour standoff.

Some of the Magdalos and journalists rushed to the toilet to wash the sting off their eyes. Some looked for the nearest fire exits or adjacent rooms, but found none.

Coverage goes on

And yet media coverage never stopped amid this chaos. Cameramen, those who still could, kept the video rolling and capturing live the frantic "orders" that came to and fro among the cornered Magdalos. Interviews were still being recorded.

Shouting match

For 30 minutes, as the assault was in progress at the lobby, Trillanes and a number of Magdalos, their civilian supporters (some of whom were senior citizens) and some media men locked themselves in and awaited their fate inside the Rizal boardroom.

Tear gas had only begun seeping into the already suffocating room.

Finally, four assault cops in gas masks came storming in, their automatic rifles pointed at their red-eyed captives.

Before anyone could be handcuffed, an enraged Trillanes still managed to snarl at one of his captors: "*Gusto mo magsigawan na lang tayo dito*! (Let's just have a shouting match here, if you like!)

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OPINION

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Ways of the Gestapo

EDITORIAL

AS SEN. ANTONIO TRILLANES IV PREPARED TO turn himself in to arresting officers, after realizing that his second attempt to topple President Macapagal-Arroyo had failed, he whined that what had transpired only showed to what great lengths the President would go to hang on to power. "You have been witnesses and victims of the kind of ruthlessness that this government has been giving (*sic*) to the people," said the former Navy lieutenant who also led the failed Oakwood mutiny in July 2003. He was, of course, referring to the overpowering force the administration unleashed against his group of about 30 soldiers and a few dozen civilian supporters.

Not very many people would agree that the government used excessive force to quash the rebellion. But very few would disagree that the way the police handled—or more accurately, manhandled—the members of the media who were covering the event bordered on ruthlessness.

As soon as Trillanes et al. signaled surrender, the police moved in to arrest everyone in sight, regardless of whether they were Magdalo soldiers or sympathizers or media people going about their business of reporting what was obviously a significant event. Then they tied up everyone with plastic tie wraps (except for a few feisty female reporters who refused to be subjected to such indignity) and herded them into buses that would later bring them to Camp Bagong Diwa in Bicutan. Some media men who stuck their hands out of the window to show to television cameras were hit with sticks. A few said the police pointed their guns at them.

What was their crime? None, police and civilian officials declared. Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno explained that there were reports that some Magdalo members or sympathizers had disguised themselves as members of the media and the police wanted to make sure they didn't get away. So, he said, everyone was being taken to Bicutan for "processing" so that the authorities could determine if those who claimed they were from the media were indeed what they claimed to be.

Of course, the police cannot be expected to know each and every reporter, photographer or cameraman working for scores of media organizations based in Metro Manila. But unless someone does not watch the news on TV at all, he would surely know that Ces Drilon and Pinky Webb work for ABS-CBN and Sandra Aguinaldo for GMA-7. Their faces are their IDs, so why did the police have to confirm their identities in Bicutan? And why was it not good enough for the police that top station officials would vouch for the identities of the people assigned to cover the event?

If all that the police wanted was to check the media people's identity, they could have done that right at the hotel by asking for everyone's ID and calling the newsrooms to verify. But no, the police had to humiliate the media people and force them to go through the ordeal of being handcuffed and transported to Bicutan. Only to find out that their information about infiltration was wrong, since they found not a single impostor among the media people they had brought in for questioning.

But Puno himself hinted that there was a dark reason for the arrests other than identity checks, when he accused the media people of "wittingly or unwittingly, all of them, obstructing justice." In other words, the administration suspected the journalists who covered the event of being part of the plot to topple Ms Arroyo. In fact, PNP Director General Avelino Razon is now threatening to charge the journalists present at the Manila Peninsula with obstruction of justice if they would file any charges against the policemen who hauled them off to Bicutan.

The media should call Razon's bluff. Let's see if he can find a friendly judge who will declare it a crime to cover a breaking news. If the media would blink in the face of such intimidation, the Gestapos in the PNP and in Malacañang will continue to march in triumph, crushing under their heels everyone's political rights and civil liberties.

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The silence of the camps

PUBLIC LIVES

Randy David

BRIG. GEN. DANILO LIM AND FORMER NAVY Lt. (s.g.) now Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV are two of the smartest officers in the Armed Forces of the Philippines. They are highly regarded by their men and by their contemporaries in the officer corps. Few senior officers in the Philippine military today can match their popularity among the soldiers. It is significant that they have also led repeated coup attempts against the government of the day. They are not novices in the art of military mutiny.

Knowing this, one is hard-pressed to understand why they would venture into something like Thursday's standoff at the Manila Peninsula Hotel, with hardly any arms to defend themselves, only to surrender without a fight to the police forces sent to arrest them. It just doesn't make sense. The two detained officers, together with their fellow officers and security detail, strolled out of the courtroom during a break in the hearing of the 2003 Oakwood mutiny. They had no fear of being re-arrested. Only a handful of civilian supporters accompanied them in their unhurried walk to the five-star hotel in which they were to make their statement. If this was going to be a coup, it was rather unusual if not suicidal. They came virtually without arms.

While they called on the Filipino people to join them in their bid to oust President Macapagal-Arroyo, they didn't sound like they were desperately waiting for people power to pick up the cause they were espousing. If they were banking on popular mobilization, then they were one day too early. They should have stretched their stay at the Peninsula till the following day, Bonifacio Day, when huge rallies were expected. In fact, this possibility was what worried the government forces. So why did Trillanes and Lim give up so quickly?

We can only speculate that their action was meant to spark a mutiny that they thought was waiting to happen. But because we did not see troops marching in the streets or moving in trucks and choosing sides, we are now led to think that the Magdalo officers badly miscalculated. In fact, the spokesmen of the Arroyo government lost no time in assuring the public that the military chain of command remained intact and that the rebels were totally isolated.

But, if indeed they were alone in this doomed and foolish adventure, how do we explain the fact that, at the height of the standoff, no military commander, apart from the chief of staff, Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr., came out or was presented to reiterate support for the Arroyo government? Why did the government rely exclusively on police forces to deal with what was openly declared as a bid to remove the existing government? Was Ms Arroyo afraid that, if compelled to declare their loyalty, a good number of the nation's soldiers might actually side with Lim and Trillanes?

In short, what did the silence of the camps during this six-hour siege signify? I doubt if General Esperon or Ms Arroyo knows. Perhaps if they know anything at all about the state of mind of the soldiers in the camps today, it might be something that is likely to give them sleepless nights in the next few weeks or months. Could this be the real reason for the sudden imposition of a midnight curfew—that they are seriously spooked by the possibility of troop movements quietly taking place in the coming days?

For it is hard to believe that the soldiers barricaded in their barracks would not care less about what was going on in Makati last Thursday. If they saw what the rest of the nation saw, and they remained silent, I would consider that a meaningful silence. In a time like ours, when images from live media pack more power than the most stirring statements, what might the silence of citizens and soldiers possibly indicate? Are their senses stunned and their will paralyzed? Or are their souls shaken and courage awakened in their hearts? Who knows?

Who would know what it means for a soldier or a citizen to see a young senator of the republic, filled with idealism, being shackled and handled like a sack of potatoes by his captors as he is led to a waiting police bus? Who would know what it means for any viewer to see an 81-year-old prince of the Church, hobbled by age, his left hand tied to the right hand of another priest, being led to a waiting police bus after having just said a prayer of hope? Who would know what it means for someone to see a whole line of media people, their hands bound in plastic restraints proudly held up above their heads, being led to a waiting police bus for "processing" as suspects? Such were among the most memorable images from Thursday's episode.

I only know that one would need to be blind and insensitive to view these snapshots as achievements of the rule of law. You take one look at General Lim and Senator Trillanes side by side General Esperon and Colonel Bacarro—and you can tell at once who among these soldiers have their ideals intact. You take one look at Bishop Julio Labayen and former Vice President Tito Guingona side by side Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno and Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye—and you know at once who the liars are.

There is a mutiny in the making not just in the camps but in the hearts of the rest of us. We were beginning to forget what social anger is all about, and what it means to take responsibility for the nation our heroes bequeathed to us. Thursday set us on a new path. We are starting to see what General Lim meant when he said: "Dissent without action is consent."

* * *

Comments to public.lives@gmail.com

A look at CARP's impact on poverty and growth

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod

IT IS THE MOST CAREFUL AND THOROUGH study that I have seen so far on the impact of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) on poverty and growth. And its unambiguous conclusion is that land ownership matters for poverty reduction and growth, and therefore CARP must be extended until its land distribution targets are achieved.

That it was funded by the Department of Agrarian Reform will for sure be used to cast suspicion on its findings, but there can be no doubt about the credibility of Arsenio Balisacan, who headed the research team. His colleagues still remember the time when he gave up a fat consultancy fee from one of the multilateral funding agencies rather than allow it to tell him how to present his findings (which did not jibe with what the institution or its staff wanted to hear).

As a matter of fact, anyone who reads even just the executive summary of his report, titled "Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program Impact Assessment—Study on the Impact of CARP on Poverty reduction and Prospects for Long-Term Growth," will immediately realize that there is no effort to brown-nose the funders, or to sugarcoat the findings. Right off, he says that 10 years (1998) after the CARP law was passed, less than two-thirds of the program scope had been accomplished; and in the succeeding eight years (as of end December, 2006), the pace of distribution had clearly slowed down because only another 24 percent of the target had been achieved.

Worse, he points out that only 18 percent of the private lands under compulsory acquisition (other than rice and corn lands) have actually been covered or distributed as of end December 2006. And as if that were not bad enough, he also points out that most of the lands (72 percent) already distributed are still not individually titled.

What this means is that most private landowners, representing 82 percent of the lands that should have been given to agrarian reform beneficiaries (ARBs), are still holding on to their land 19 years after the law was passed. The supreme irony is that landowners, having successfully staved off the compulsory acquisition, are demanding that CARP be terminated, since it is a failure (which means they get to keep their land). It is also clear that 72 percent of the ARBs are operating their farms with one arm tied figuratively behind their backs—since they don't have individual titles; not only are the incentive effects of ownership not present, the farmers also have difficulty getting credit and are more prone to selling their rights or abandoning their lands.

But having made short shrift of the so-called accomplishments of CARP as far as land distribution is concerned, Balisacan and his associates get down to brass tacks, studying the impact of CARP, i.e., whether it has improved the quality of life or the welfare of the ARBs. And the short answer is an unqualified "Yes."

How did Balisacan go about doing his study? He used census and survey data including the 1990 and 2000 Census of Population and Housing, the 1991 and 2002 Census of Agriculture, as well as the Family Income and Expenditure Survey, the Labor Force Survey, and the Annual Poverty Indicators Survey, plus data from the Bureau of Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Development, the Bureau of Agricultural Statistics, and the National Statistical Coordination Board. Choosing certain critical monetary and non-monetary indicators of welfare, he compared the performance of program beneficiaries in barangays that were Agrarian Reform Communities (ARCs)—what he called the treatment group—with the performance of farmers living in a matched set of non-ARCs, called the control group. Roughly 3,000 barangays were studied, divided evenly between the treatment group and the control group.

Some of the findings: Overall, the proportion of irrigated rice farms in the ARCs is higher than in the non-ARCs; while there is a decrease in the number of economic facilities in both sets of barangays, the reduction was larger in the non-ARC barangays; while there is an increase in the number of barangays with street pattern and communication facilities, the ARCs had a higher increment, indicating better access to markets.

Other noteworthy findings: In 1990, the per capita expenditure in ARC barangays was lower than in the non-ARC barangays, but in 2000, both figures had increased, with per capita expenditures higher in the former than in the latter. Also in the same period of time, non-monetary indicators of welfare, as demonstrated by housing materials (e.g., strong roof, strong walls) and educational attainment of members, households in ARCs showed slightly better performance than those in non-ARCs.

More significantly for policy purposes, though, are the findings that per capita expenditure, per capita income, and per capita net farm incomes of farmers owning lands (whether in ARCs or non-ARCs) are significantly higher than their counterparts who do not own land. This shows unambiguously the importance of ownership or control of the land in determining incomes of farmers. Moreover, he also found that the odds that a household is non-poor is higher by between 1.8 and 2.6 times than the odds that it will be poor, if it owns land—again reinforcing the importance of land ownership.

For poverty reduction, and for income growth, CARP is crucial. That is Balisacan's message. Congress should hear it loud and clear.

Walking 1,600 km for social justice

NEXT WEEK, SOME 55 FARMERS—15 OF THEM women—will reach Manila in a quest for social justice, after walking more than 1,600 kilometers from the town of Sumilao in Bukidnon, starting last Oct. 10. They regularly walked about 30 km a day, but on Nov. 23 did 52 km to avoid being stranded in flooded areas. They aim to be at Malacañang on Dec. 10, International Human Rights Day.

The walkers are asserting their right as tillers to 144 hectares of prime agricultural land in San Vicente, Sumilao, by virtue of a Certificate of Land Ownership Award (CLOA) issued to them in 1995 under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP).

Delays, delays, delays. To evade CARP coverage, landowner Norberto Quisumbing stalled by proposing to convert the land to an agro-industrial estate having a development academy, cultural center, institute for livelihood science, sports development complex, agro-industrial park, forest development facilities, 360-room hotel, restaurant, golf course, housing projects, etc., which all proved to be false promises. Agrarian Reform Secretary Ernesto Garilao disapproved it, but then Bukidnon Gov. Carlos Fortich wrote a letter-appeal to the Office of the President, and Executive Secretary Ruben Torres approved the conversion proposal in 1996.

To redress the Torres decision, in 1997 the farmers went on a hunger strike for 28 days, until President Fidel V. Ramos issued a so-called "win-win" solution awarding 100 hectares to the farmers and 44 hectares to Quisumbing. But FVR's formula was elevated to the Supreme Court, which ruled (through the Second Division, on April 24, 1998) that the Torres decision could not be reversed, on a technicality of late filing of Motion for Reconsideration by the DAR. When the farmers and the DAR filed their Motions for Reconsideration, the Supreme Court's Second Division was split, 2-2, with then-Justice (now Chief Justice) Reynato Puno voting in favor of the farmers.

SOCIAL CLIMATE

Mahar Mangahas

Although the conversion proposal had thus gotten the nod of the Supreme Court, Quisumbing did not in fact implement it within the required five years, and instead, in 2002, sold the land to San Miguel Foods Inc., which means to make it into a piggery. Citing the violation of the terms of the conversion, on Nov. 3, 2004 the farmers petitioned the DAR to cancel it. After two years, the DAR confirmed (Oct. 27, 2006) that the conversion had not been done—there was no development academy etc. However, the DAR also passed the buck to the Office of the President (OP) by claiming that OP took jurisdiction ever since the 1996 Torres decision.

This year, the farmers elevated their petition (Jan. 27, 2007) to the OP, which initially denied it (Oct. 3, 2007) on the claim that the farmers lack personality to ask for it, but two weeks ago (Nov. 16, 2007) it remanded the case to the DAR for resolution. It took another week for the DAR to receive the remand (Nov. 23, 2007). The Sumilao farmers are now awaiting the DAR's action on their demands for: (a) a Cease and Desist Order on the conversion of the land into a piggery, and (b) a Notice of Coverage to start the process of distribution of the land to beneficiaries under CARP.

The Sumilao farmers have a strong case. They are supported by many advocacy groups, including many in the Catholic hierarchy. They got help from many sympathizers, including Naga City Mayor Jesse Robredo, all along their walk. Their legal counsel includes the Sentro ng Alternatibong Lingap Panligal (SALIGAN), based at the Ateneo de Manila University.

Agrarian reform is a slow process. The Agricultural Land Reform Code of 1963 aimed to abolish share tenancy—though proportional sharing between landlord and tenant is not unjust per se. Operation Land Transfer in 1972 provided for rice and corn tillers to become owners over a 15-year period. The CARP, since 1987, covers all crops, which makes sense, though its ban on the use of land as collateral for credit is a hindrance to market forces.

The continuation of serious agrarian unrest shows that agrarian reform is **incomplete**—as it is incomplete in Mexico, even after a hundred years. To give up on agrarian reform is like giving up on democracy altogether, just because one can see that the present system is still flawed.

* * *

My first personal experience in doing a survey was in 1973, involving 387 rice farmers in Nueva Ecija, the pilot province of land reform. The study "Tenants, Lessees, Owners: Welfare Implications of Tenure Change" (by myself, V. A. Miralao, and R. P. de los Reyes, Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1976) found that owner-operators, share tenants, and fixed-lease tenants are equally productive. Owner-operators are the best-off because they have no land rent to pay.

In late 1986, when I was Neda consultant on land reform, in a meeting with President Corazon Aquino, Executive Secretary Joker Arroyo, and Neda Director-General Winnie Monsod, Arroyo asked me how much more agricultural productivity to expect out of the estimated multibillion-peso cost of comprehensive agrarian reform. My reply of "None" and that we should be satisfied if productivity did not decline despite the agrarian adjustment was a shock to Joker, who reacted, "Then we will be throwing the money down a black hole!" I responded that the government would be spending merely money, rather than blood, to solve the perennial problem of agrarian unrest.

* * *

Contact SWS: www.sws.org.ph or mahar.mangahas@sws.org.ph.

Hero worship

COMMENTARY

Eugenia Duran-Apostol

WE ARE HERE TODAY TO HONOR 135 DISTINguished men and women, whom we recognize as heroes and martyrs of our country.

Their names are engraved in the Wall of Remembrance: Benigno Aquino Jr., Cesar Climaco, Macli-ing Dulag, Voltaire Garcia, Evelio Javier, Edgar Jopson, Abraham Sarmiento, Carlos Tayag, Emmanuel Yap, Jose Diokno, Joaquin Roces, Lorenzo Tañada, Juan Escandor, Estelita Juco, Gaston Ortigas, Claudio Teehankee, Calixto Zaldivar, Emmanuel Lacaba, Eduardo Quintero, Francisco Rodrigo, Jose Maria Velez, Raul Manglapus, Pacifico Ortiz, Renato Constantino, Jaime Ongpin, Antonio Fortich, Armando Malay, Jose Burgos, Paul Malay, Augusto Sanchez, Jaime Sin, Haydee Yorac, Teresa Vytiaco and Cecilia Muñoz-Palma.

This year we add the names of Lino Brocka, Rizal Yuyitung, Nick Solana and Aloysius Baes.

These modern-day heroes fought Marcos' unwelcome designs to perpetuate himself in power. Today we are relatively free of military abuse because of their courage and determination. The dictator is gone, but government remains abusive and so inefficient that suffering predominates among the poor and the future looks bleak and worrisome.

Is there anything we can do about the situation? We cannot lose hope. We shouldn't.

We have to do something positive for our future. I am fortunate to have some friends who think our future is in education.

In 2002, the Foundation for Worldwide People Power (FWWPP)—where I am chairperson of the Board of Trustees—launched a national advocacy called The Education Revolution. Together with various experts from education, business, government, the academe and the development community, we took a long hard look at the state of education today.

We learned that the achievement gap between the 18 million public school pupils and students and the fortunate few whose parents can afford the tuition of high-quality private schools is so wide that these two groups of learners might as well be living in different countries.

What exactly contributes to quality education? Does it refer to physical facilities, such as well-ventilated and brightly lit classrooms? Or does quality education pertain to the proficiency of teachers in their subjects?

How about the parents and the community that the school serves? They are a positive factor that contributes to better learning outcomes and to inculcating positive social values in our youth.

Less than one percent of all Grade 6 pupils managed to score a 75-percent passing mark in all subject areas tested (i.e., English, Science, Math, Filipino and Hekasi or Social Studies). The public high school seniors fared much worse, registering an achievement average of a little over 45 percent. The dropout rate is highest at Grades 1 to 3 due to a number of factors, most notably malnutrition.

Their teachers are equally handicapped. It is common for high school teachers to handle subjects other than those that they majored in. Grade school teachers have to contend with really large class sizes in cramped classrooms.

To further aggravate matters, our best teachers have steadily been migrating to better paying jobs overseas.

The FWWPP launched the Education Revolution in 2002 on two legs or core programs, namely, the Local Education Alliance and Mentoring the Mentors. Both programs draw from the lessons of true People Power. The Local Education Alliance has a simplified mobilization module to enable communities to arrive at an organized and sustainable approach to raise the education quality of their public schools.

The Mentoring the Mentors program, meanwhile combines highly interactive motivational sessions with deeply intensive workshops on active teaching and learning strategies, including discussions on how to make better lesson plans and test construction and measurement.

Today, after five years, the People Power character of the Education Revolution has finally taken root.

The Local Education Alliance is now a cornerstone of the 57-75 Movement headed by the powerful League of Corporate Foundations and the Philippine Business of Education. The 57-75 movement seeks to make education improvement a national priority. Its name derives from these big corporate groups' collective desire to focus the manpower and resources of their respective Corporate Social Responsibility programs on education quality, as symbolized by a positive change in the National Achievement Test scores from the present 57 percent to at least a passing 75 percent within five years.

The Mentoring the Mentors program has evolved equally well. It now has an improved professional skills improvement module and it has sharpened its focus on the learner.

Mentoring the Mentors aims to draw in progressive principals who have embraced their role as instructional leaders of their schools and to foster a culture of education quality among these school heads.

The gains that the FWWPP has made so far are just a proverbial drop in the bucket. To really make a difference, we have to reach into the hero in all of us, just like these ordinary men and women did in their time.

Excerpts from remarks delivered by Eugenia Duran-Apostol at the unveiling of the Martyrs and Heroes for 2007 at the Bantayog ng Mga Bayani. Ms Apostol is the founding chair of the Foundation for Worldwide People Power.

The Alston Report: the challenge to gov't

EARLIER THIS WEEK, PHILIP ALSTON, THE United Nations special rapporteur on extrajudicial executions, released his final report on the extrajudicial killings in the Philippines. Consistent with Alston's earlier public pronouncements on the issue, the report concluded that responsibility for most of the killings, particularly those of leftist activists, could be laid on the doorstep of the military.

According to the report, these extrajudicial executions were carried out as part of a military counter-insurgency strategy which targets leaders and members of "front" organizations of the CPP-NPA. The "official line" of the AFP that the killings were the result of internal purges within the ranks of the communist insurgency was dismissed as being "strikingly unconvincing."

The report, however, did not stop there. While dismissing the military's theory of internal purge, it nonetheless recognized the responsibility of the CPP-NPA for some extrajudicial executions, most notably the murder of civilians under the guise of "revolutionary justice," and the killing of peasants in the course of agrarian reform disputes. The report was just as firm in characterizing these CPP-NPA killings as being clear violations of international law.

Responses to the report have thus far run along predictable lines. A spokesperson for the President was quick to deny that there was an official "policy" supporting the killings. The Philippine National Police doggedly insisted that the report was merely an "opinion" and that any of its findings should be supported by "evidence which could stand in a court of law." On the other side, the party-list groups Bayan Muna, Anakpawis and Gabriela immediately called for the sacking of top defense officials for their culpability in the killings, while remaining silent on the report's similarly firm indictment of the CPP-NPA

COMMENTARY

Ibarra M. Gutierrez III

Initial reactions fail to adequately grasp the purpose and full import of the Alston report

These initial reactions, anchored as they are on the vested political interests of these various groups, fail to adequately grasp the purpose and full import of the Alston report.

To begin with, the principal objective of a report by a special rapporteur is to assess a state's compliance with its legal obligations in a given area under international law. Hence, the report opens with an enumeration of applicable treaties that the Philippines has ratified, namely the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Geneva Conventions. These form the legal basis for Philippine obligations with respect to the issue of extrajudicial killings.

These obligations, according to a familiar mantra, are those to respect, protect and fulfill, in this specific case the right of persons to life and to judicial process. The obligation to "respect" requires government to refrain from engaging in extrajudicial killings. The obligation to "protect" mandates government to prevent third parties, whether rogue soldiers or armed insurgents, from doing the same. The obligation to "fulfill" compels government to put in place the necessary mechanisms, such as courts clothed with adequate powers, to ensure the enjoyment of the rights.

Under this framework, it does not matter if government does not formally adopt a policy condoning the killings. It still is in breach of its obligations so long as the killings are perpetrated by its agents, in this case the military, and it fails to take appropriate actions to stop them and enforce liability on the perpetrators.

Similarly, as the report is concerned with the larger issue of state compliance, it should not be characterized in the same manner as a criminal investigation. Insistence on the report following the formal rules of evidence observed by the courts is misplaced, since what is at issue is not individual criminal culpability, but the adequacy of state action with respect to its obligations under international human rights law.

The fairness or validity of the report, rather, should be assessed by the methodology used in collecting the information on which it was based. In the case of the Alston report, it was anchored on extensive interviews from the government, military and civil society, as well as documents provided by these same groups. In other words, its conclusions came after the weighing of information from various, undoubtedly contradictory, sources.

That the report paints a grim picture of the Philippine situation cannot be denied. But rather than viewing it as a public relations dilemma that has to be "handled" or dismissed, government should take up the real challenge of acting on the recommendations set forth in the report. After all, Alston's investigation was done at the behest of the Philippine government itself. It would be the height of obtuseness, not to mention absurdity, for the government to dismiss the selfsame findings it sought.

Ibarra M. Gutierrez III, is director of the UP Institute of Human Rights

A boulevard's charm

WHEN I WAS ABOUT 7 OR 8 YEARS OLD, EVERY DAY, MY parents would take us, me and my siblings, to Rizal Boulevard for early morning walks.

As they briskly walked along the seemingly endless, paved stretch, we kids would try, with little success, to keep up with their pace, even as we took pleasure in watching other people who, like us, were luxuriating in the boulevard's charm—lovers who seemed oblivious to everyone else around them; dog-walkers wary of those who were afraid of dogs; old people barely able to move an inch with their every step; and athletes with earphones, breezing past everyone else.

YOUNG BLOOD

Alvin Clyde O. Gregorio

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

Back then, this was how my day started and, young as I was, I would not complain when my father would nudge me from slumber and make me and my siblings prepare for that early morning ritual. I remember that as a young boy, I was enthralled and totally captivated by the beauty of the first streaks of light breaking off the horizon with the rising sun.

Rizal Boulevard beckoned to everyone as a place to get ready for, or as a momentary escape from, a stressful day. The cold morning breeze, which permeated with the raw and refreshing scent of early morning dew, was always relaxing to my senses and made me face the new day with much zest and optimism.

I remember that the boulevard was the first place that my first girlfriend and I went to for our first date. Young as we were then, we were convinced that our relationship was for keeps and—corny as it may sound—that we would inevitably spend the rest of our lives together. The boulevard provided a most picturesque backdrop to a love story that was slowly unfolding. I remember the golden shades of dusk taking over the skies over our heads as we talked about how our life together would be. She would be a doctor and I would be a lawyer in Paris or New Zealand, perhaps. And, back then, we sincerely believed that this was our absolute destiny. Perhaps, it was the unraveling, newly discovered feeling which led us to believe in the folly of a perfect relationship. Or it could have been the boulevard's allure which made us hopeless romantics and led us into believing that our love would transcend the physical plane, that ours was a love ethereal and, more than that, magical.

It did not, however, take long for me to realize that we were just blinded by the rawness of our emotions. We woke up, sooner than we could have imagined, to the simple truth that the ideal partner does not exist in this world. After successive bouts of petty quarrels and endless disputes over the most trivial things, we finally decided to end our relationship.

In anguish over my first heartbreak, I invited my close friends to a drinking spree in the boulevard. But for the fleeting, if illusory, joy and solace that came with the excessive intake of alcohol, the boulevard then, to me, had become cold and lifeless. It only fanned the feeling of despair inside me.

But that is how I came to the realization that life and love are never constant—and that our lives are oftentimes more "broken" than complete.

In November last year, I was back in the boulevard where I spent a lot of reminiscing and reflecting. Much has happened since that fateful night of heavy drinking, when a group of young boys foolishly believed that Tanduay 65 was a source of comfort. And I have awakened to the reality that life is what you make of it.

As the final rays of the setting sun yielded to the embrace of the early evening's shadows, I thought deep into what I have done with my life: I had squandered three years of it in a university that taught me that academic and personal freedom are essential, but too much of the latter can actually make you lose your focus and direction in life.

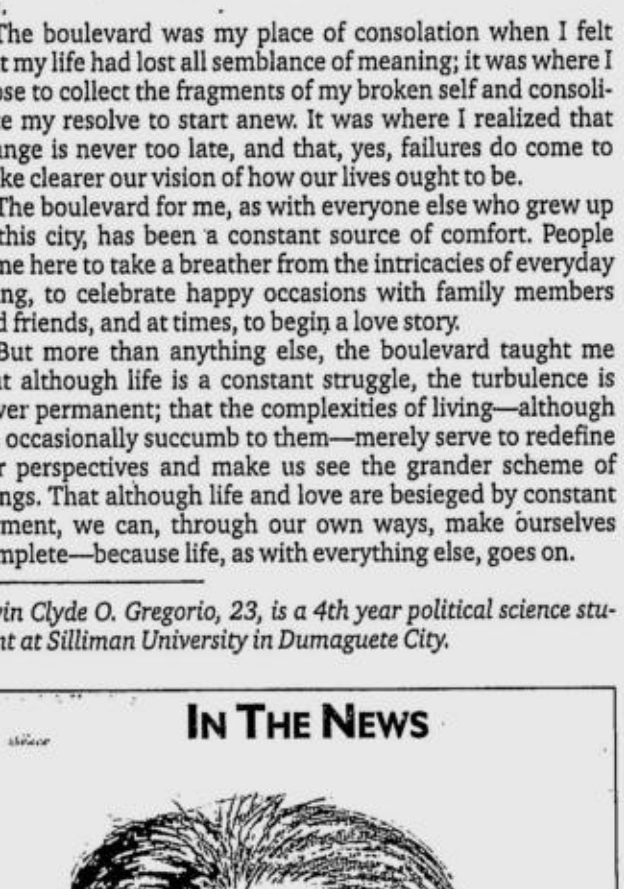
The boulevard was my place of consolation when I felt that my life had lost all semblance of meaning; it was where I chose to collect the fragments of my broken self and consolidate my resolve to start anew. It was where I realized that change is never too late, and that, yes, failures do come to make clearer our vision of how our lives ought to be.

The boulevard for me, as with everyone else who grew up in this city, has been a constant source of comfort. People come here to take a breather from the intricacies of everyday living, to celebrate happy occasions with family members and friends, and at times, to begin a love story.

But more than anything else, the boulevard taught me that although life is a constant struggle, the turbulence is never permanent; that the complexities of living—although we occasionally succumb to them—merely serve to redefine our perspectives and make us see the grander scheme of things. That although life and love are besieged by constant torment, we can, through our own ways, make ourselves complete—because life, as with everything else, goes on.

Alvin Clyde O. Gregorio, 23, is a 4th year political science student at Silliman University in Dumaguete City.

IN THE NEWS



Sen. Manuel Roxas II

LETTERS TO THE PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Proposal for a happy and humane Christmas

THIS IS IN REACTION TO THE ITEM "Australian roast calf for Christmas." (INQUIRER, 11/8/07) Don't be a scrooge this Christmas—serve a delicious vegetarian feast and give calves something to be merry about.

Each year, cows and calves are killed for Christmas. Before ending up as the holiday centerpiece, gentle calves are taken from their mothers immediately after birth and raised so as to deliberately induce borderline anemia. The calves are denied their basic needs, including access to their mother's milk and access to pasture and exercise, and are often restrained to make any movement so that their flesh stays tender. They spend six to seven months packed tightly in dark sheds, mired in their own waste.

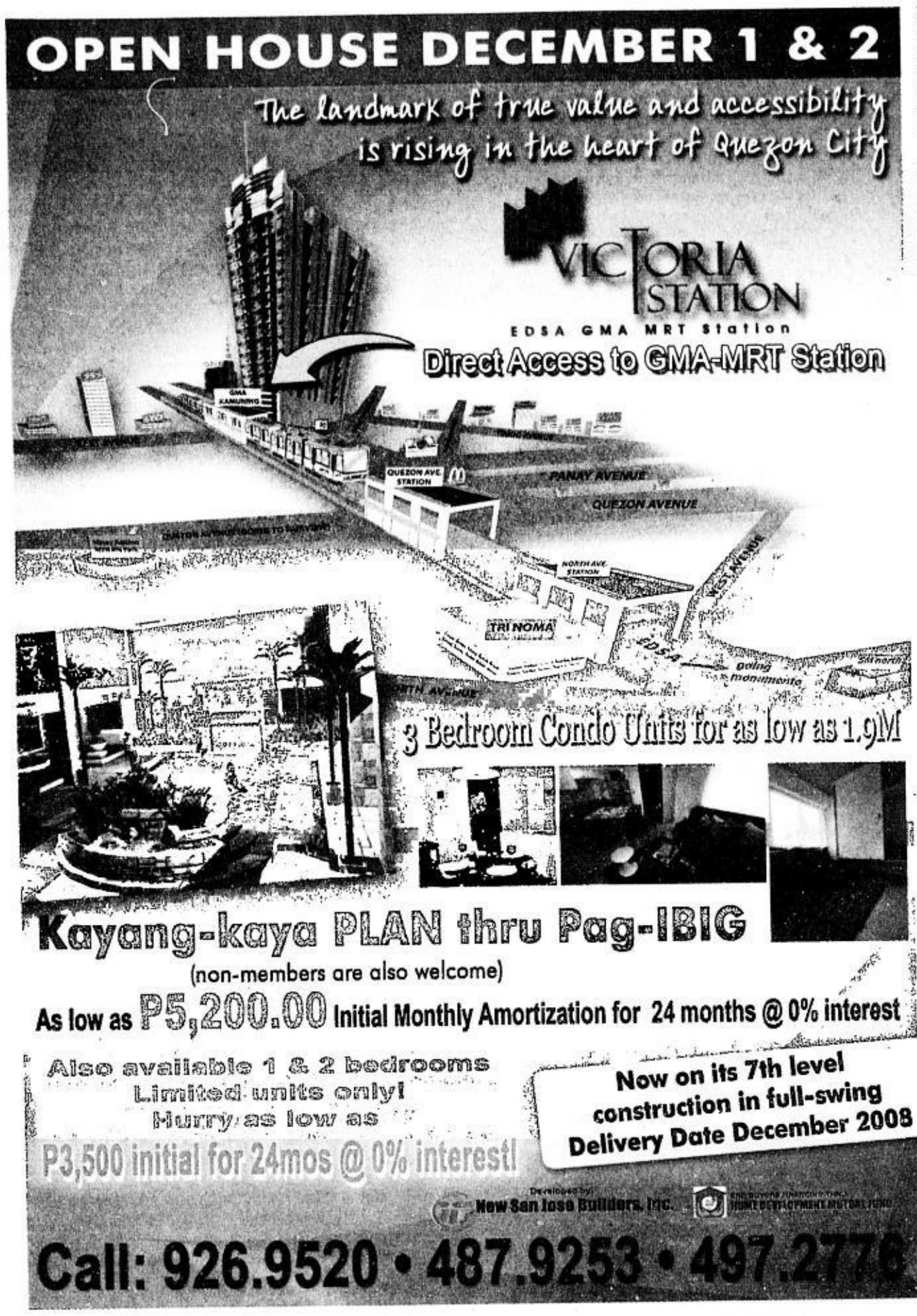
Calves confined to veal crates, which usually measure two-feet wide, cannot turn around, stretch their limbs, or even lie down comfortably. Scientific research indicates that calves confined to these crates experience "chronic stress" and require approximately five times more medication than calves living in more spacious conditions. It is not surprising, then, that calf meat is among the most likely meat to contain illegal drug residues, which pose a threat to human consumers. Researchers also report that calves exhibit abnormal coping behaviors associated with frustration, including head-tossing and shaking, kicking, scratching and stereotypical chewing behavior. Confined calves experience leg and joint disorders and their ability to walk is impaired.

During slaughter, calves are hung upside-down for 24 hours to drain their blood. They are conscious when their throats are slit. No painkillers are used during these agonizing procedures.

Please, help make animal suffering a thing of Christmas past.

Visit VegCooking.com or GoVeg.com for free, festive vegetarian recipes, and have a happy and humane holiday.

—ROCHELLE REGODON,
campaigns manager,
People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals Asia-Pacific (Peta),
RochelleR@PETAAsiaPacific.com



BAZAAR	DATES	VENUE	CONTACT
Karl Edwards	Nov. 30, Dec. 1-2, 8-9, 15-23, 29-30	NBC Tent, The Fort, Taguig	372-8453/374-3726
St. James Bazaar	Nov. 30, Dec. 1-2	Cuenca Court, Ayala Alabang	842-5140/807-1623
Venture 7	Dec. 2	Intercon Hotel, Makati	793-7000
Christmas Bazaar	Dec. 2	Covered Court, Solar Park, Bel-Air, Makati	895-4011/897-1856
American Women's Club	Dec. 3	World Trade Center (WTC)	817-7587
Ayala Alabang Village Bazaar	Dec. 8-9, 15-16	Cuenca Court, Ayala Alabang	807-0511
Ateneo Management Bazaar	Dec. 8-9	Santuario de San Antonio Parish Grounds, Forbes Park	843-8830
Zonta Manila International Bazaar	Dec. 9	Intercon Hotel, Makati	793-7000
Angel Sent Bazaar	Dec. 1-2, Dec. 15-16	Santuario de San Antonio Parish Grounds, Forbes Park	843-8830
World Bazaar Festival	Dec. 6-16	World Trade Center (WTC)	531-6350
Ex-Link's Mega Xmas Expo	Dec. 14, 15-16	SM Mega Mall, Hall 2	643-3887/640-7439
International Christmas Bazaar	Dec. 18-23	SM Megamall,, Halls 2 & 3	643-3887/640-7439
Noel	Dec. 21-23	World Trade Center (WTC)	687-2955
AAVA-EMPC	Dec. 22-23	Cuenca Court, Ayala Alabang	807-0511

Martinez's false claim re Aquino's murder

I WAS VERY DISGUSTED WITH THE CLAIM of Pablo Martinez, one of the soldiers convicted of killing Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr., that it was Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco who ordered the assassination. Martinez, who was recently granted executive clemency by President Macapagal-Arroyo, also claimed that he spoke with other "Cojuangco men" involved in the assassination, and that they told him that Cojuangco gave them the order. This claim, which is totally absurd, preposterous and tainted with malice, is just a figment of Martinez's imagination.

The Danding Cojuangco that I know is a God-fearing, peace-loving, brilliant, honest businessman, a real man who has a heart for the poor and the needy. I cannot imagine him ordering the assassination of the late Sen. Ninoy Aquino.

Permit me to state what I know about what Danding did to help Ninoy while the latter was in jail:

1. He persuaded the late President Ferdinand Marcos to allow Ninoy, who was suffering from a heart problem, to go to the United States for medical treatment.

2. He financially assisted the family of Ninoy during his medical treatment in Boston.

3. He called and persuaded Ninoy to complete his heart operation and rehabilitation and to postpone his coming home.

4. Lastly, he was not aware of the date and time Ninoy was coming home.

I am, therefore, requesting Martinez to be truthful and to shut his mouth if he is not sure of what he is talking about. His claim is false. He should just accept his pardon and refrain from tarnishing the names of other people.

Life is short; he should not make it shorter, because God punishes those who tell lies.

—ROCKMAN O. SAMPULNA,
4 Soledad St., Kimpo Subd.,
RH13, Cotabato City

Environmental lessons from Samareños

WE COMMEND THE DECISION OF ENVIRONment Secretary Lito Atienza to suspend the timber license agreement (TLA) of Basey Wood Industries Inc. (Baswood) in Samar Island. The permit, issued by then Secretary Angelo Reyes last June 21, reversed the total log ban that protected Samar's forest.

Atienza was correct in pointing out the irony of the decision to renew Baswood's permit: while other countries are realigning national policies to address climate change, the granting of a timber license agreement to Baswood smacked of economic opportunism and shortsightedness, sending confusing signals with respect to the constitutional mandate of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Renewing the Baswood permit has put into question government policy and obligation to lead the effort on climate change.

While we welcome the decision to review Baswood's TLA, the DENR should also look into the institutionalized contradictions in our environmental policies. Sustainability, anchored on long-term environmental protection and not just on short-term economic needs, should govern the use of natural resources. This includes the conduct of public consultations, a requirement that is already well entrenched in the Environmental Impact Assessment (ETA) System of the country, yet is not fully implemented by environmental management authorities in many cases. The communities affected by government and private projects that make use of natural resources should be allowed to participate in the process of granting of environmental permits.

We must likewise ultimately commend the Samareños for their concerted action against the previous permit granted by then Secretary Mike Defensor to San Jose Timber, which he had to take back after the backlash from the local people, including the Church. The people of Samar, who have remained vigilant in the protection of their natural resources, will not take this issue sitting down. They know the value of their forests and they have fought hard to protect what remains of them. They have won before and if the need for collective action is called for, they shall do so again. The rest of us, the DENR included, can learn lessons from them.

—ETTA PARGAS-ROSALES,
chair emeritus, Akbayan

Contraceptive use and abortion rates go together

IN RINA JIMENEZ-DAVID'S 3-PART COLUMN on the proposed Quezon City family planning ordinance (INQUIRER, 11/18, 20, 21/07), she complained that "thick-skulled" pro-life advocates just don't get it. David and Councilor Sep Juico believe that the proposed ordinance is anti-abortion because the government will make contraceptives available and accessible.

However, in a March 2003 research report on the relationship between contraception and abortion, it was observed that as contraceptive use increased in six countries, so did the abortion levels. Abortion rates worldwide fell only when fertility rates have dropped significantly. The study concluded: "The parallel rise in abortion and contraception ... occurred because increased contraceptive use alone was unable to meet the growing need for fertility regulation in situations where fertility was falling rapidly."

Guess who provided the evidence that negates the oft-repeated justification for contraceptives? The Alan Guttmacher Institute, the research arm of Planned Parenthood. Its report confirmed a 1999 study with the same conclusions.

Therefore, it will take many more abortions before Philippine fertility rates fall to the levels considered acceptable to population control advocates. How many more unborn babies will die in this country if national and local legislators continue to demand that taxpayers pay for contraceptives?

—MEG FRANCISCO,
mvf@pldtdsl.net

Lost opportunity for country's high court

MANY FILIPINOS, RICH AND POOR ALIKE, all over the country, were surprised when President Macapagal-Arroyo hastily granted former President Joseph Estrada executive clemency.

Many veteran practicing lawyers and legal luminaries were convinced that the Sandiganbayan decision convicting Estrada would most likely be reversed had it been elevated to the Supreme Court.

But then Estrada's lawyer, Jose Flaminiano, asked Malacañang to pardon Estrada. Of course, I fully understand Estrada's plight while in detention. Also, the anguish he was going through at the thought of the weakening condition of his mother must have forced him to seek presidential pardon. And he was fully aware of the hopelessness of the cause of a septuagenarian in the face of a wheel of justice grinding exceedingly slow. Estrada further noted that an appeal to the Supreme Court had little chance of succeeding, considering that the incumbent Chief Justice was the one who penned the decision finding Estrada "constructively resigned" from the presidency.

Now the plunder case, dubbed as the trial of the century, has finally come to a close. As a trial lawyer, my only regret is that our Supreme Court was not given the opportunity to review this case, if only to enrich Philippine jurisprudence.

—ARTURO M. TOPACIO JR.,
Dra. Salamanca cor. L. Jaena Sts.,
San Roque, Cavite City 4100

Tasteless anti-poverty summit in five-star hotel

WHEN PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO convened the anti-poverty summit at the Manila Hotel, one of the country's most expensive five-star hotels, she should have considered the blatant contradiction between what the venue symbolizes and the subject of the exercise.

It would have been more appropriate if the summit were held in some other place—where wealth and privilege didn't advertise themselves, or where the Mariannet Ampers of our country would feel that they belonged.

Such pompous posturing of the anti-poverty summit in a posh hotel only exacerbated the frustration and helplessness of poor Filipinos on the brink of despair.

Indeed, it was previously unthinkable for a 12-year-old girl like Mariannet to commit suicide just because she could not afford a P100-school project. But this has come to pass, and the sad truth that's now facing us is the fragility of the wounded Filipino psyche.

Mariannet's wishes were basic. She merely wanted a bicycle and a bag, and jobs for her father and mother. But the simplicity of an unrealized dream may be the very reason she chose to leave her difficult life.

Many will talk and write about Mariannet. Many will talk about graft and corruption, inequality, the callousness of government officials and the desire of many Filipinos to be able to lick these social evils.

My own wish, however, is for Mariannet's diary to be published in a series, so that the Filipino nation may come face to face with poverty that a lot of us deny, struggle with, or try to overcome with hopes and prayers.

Maybe, Mariannet's simple story would give us our most important lessons in life—simplicity, human decency and love for family.

—GUALBERTO J. DELA LLANA,
Castillejos, Zambales

Trying to make sense out of it all

From page A1

the 2001 withdrawals of military support which terminated President Estrada's presidency? Both Lim and Trillanes are trained military officers and it is hard to imagine that they anticipated immediate success. I shall say nothing of the Catholic bishops who joined them.

Long-term investment

I can, however, see this failed eruption as a long term investment for the future. The public reaction, while indicating disagreement with the means used by Trillanes and Lim, shows a widespread desire for an end to corruption that has weighed down the current administration. Official rhetoric does not convince the public that the current administration is doing enough to make the needed correction. Platitudes do not achieve reform. Yesterday's adventure might yet bear fruit.

What of the police reaction to the situation? It was clear from the speed with which Manila Peninsula was cleared that police authorities have learned that protracted negotiations can only do more damage. They decided to cut quickly. But did they cut clean?

Constitutional shortcuts

Recent Supreme Court cases have made it very clear that an emergency situation, even if it is declared by the President (and one was not declared this time) does not give more powers to the executive arm than what it has in normal situations. It does not authorize constitutional shortcuts. In this connection we must look at two actions taken by government: the arrest of media practitioners and the imposition of curfew.

An arrest in general terms is a deprivation of liberty for the purpose of making a person answer for an offense. One can quibble about words and call what was done to media practitioners an "invitation for processing." Incidentally, jurisprudence says that one brought to a police station by invitation is already covered by the constitutional protections for persons under custodial investigation. Besides, an invitation may be declined. This was not the case with the media men and women. They were not only herded into vans against their wishes but were even manacled while being brought to Bicutan. In short, they were ignominiously arrested.

No warrant of arrest

The basic rule is that no person may be deprived of liberty without due process of law. Due process requires that no person may be arrested without a warrant of arrest issued by a judge except in those instances where warrantless arrests are constitutionally allowed. I am assuming that there was no warrant for the arrest of the media people. Was this a case of a justifiable warrantless arrest?

What immediately comes to my mind is the exception covering the arrest of persons caught *in flagrante delicto*, that is, caught in the act of committing a crime. What crime were the media people committing? The police officers themselves did not know and so they were brought to Bicutan to verify whether they were committing a crime. In other words, shoot first; ask questions later!

Another thing which comes to my mind is what is called in jurisprudence a "stop and frisk situation." An experienced police officer is allowed to stop and frisk a person for the purpose if verifying of a person acting in a suspicious manner is in possession of a dangerous weapon. But this obviously was not the case.

Error corrected

I will say nothing about freedom of expression because I happen to believe that media people do not have more freedom of expression than ordinary persons. They are more prone to having their right violated but they do not have a superior freedom of expression. But we should look into what the police did with their equipment and other materials, if anything at all.

The President herself must have seen the error of the situation and tried damage control by giving the instruction that the processing must be expedited. And it was. I hope a lesson was learned.

Curfew

Let me also say something about the imposition of curfew.

Basically curfew is a limitation on freedom of movement. It is interesting to note that the 1987 Bill of Rights tightened the protection on the freedom of movement. It now says "**Neither shall the right to travel be impaired except in the interest of national security, public safety, or public health, as may be provided by law.**" If you take out the phrase "as may be provided by law," what is left is the discretionary power to limit travel on the basis of "national security, public safety, or public health." This was the old provision. The 1986 Constitutional Commission added the phrase "as may be provided by law" in order to limit executive discretion by requiring that the limitation be done in accordance with an existing law whether general or specific. Thus, for instance, there is a law allowing control of exit from the country under certain circumstances.

I am not sure if there is a law covering the imposition of curfew. At any rate, the problem of last night's curfew has become mooted by the ticking of the clock.

Cameraman arrested not once, but twice

From page A1

an ABS-CBN cameraman had a brush with the police—not just once, but twice.

After a harrowing day of coverage, Norberto Calupitan was apprehended at a police checkpoint on his way home Thursday night.

Checkpoints were set up all over Metro Manila on Thursday following the Philippine National Police's declaration of a curfew from midnight to 5 a.m.

Members of the press who remained inside the Peninsula Hotel in Makati City along with the Magdalo soldiers were invited by the police for questioning, raising concerns of a media crackdown.

Calupitan had just come from detention and was dropped off at the ABS-CBN to get his car. He was on his way home to King's Point Subdivision on Mindanao Avenue when he noticed that his car's rear tires needed air. He decided to go to a gasoline station on Timog Avenue near the Tomas Morato Avenue rotunda.

"I was circling the rotunda when I saw a police checkpoint. The cop asked me where I was going. I said I needed to pump some air in my tires. He saw my ABS-CBN ID card and let me go," Calupitan told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

The tired camera crew thought he was off the hook—or so he thought. It was a few minutes past 1 a.m.

Another checkpoint

A few meters away was another checkpoint which he thought would allow him to pass since the previous checkpoint had just cleared him.

A policeman shouted, "*Hinto* (Stop)!" Calupitan pulled over to the side of the road.

"*P— mo*," a policeman cursed him. "*Hindi mo ba ako nakita* (Didn't you see me)!"

Although he showed him his ABS-CBN ID card and his driver's license, the policeman demanded to see his car registration.

However, Calupitan was unable to retrieve the papers since the latch of his dashboard compartment was broken.

So off he went to the nearby Kamuning police station on Edsa, escorted by policemen from the second checkpoint.

"I called ABS-CBN and was advised by Rupert Ampil (network staff) to just go to the station and someone would go there to help me," Calupitan said.

At the station, he was met by ABS-CBN TV reporter Gretchen Malalad who advised him to break the lock of his compartment and produce the papers.

Holed up with Trillanes

"*Pinuwersa ko na lang para makuha yung papel. Tapos ni*-log *na lang sa* blotter *yung insidente* (I forced the compartment open to get the papers. Then they logged the incident in the blotter)," Calupitan related.

Mercifully, he was not detained and was finally able to go home at around 3 a.m.

Calupitan was part of the team of TV broadcaster Ces Drilon. During the standoff, they were holed up in a room on the second floor of the hotel along with Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV.

"I was the one recording footage of [Trillanes] a few minutes before we were retrieved by the police," he said.

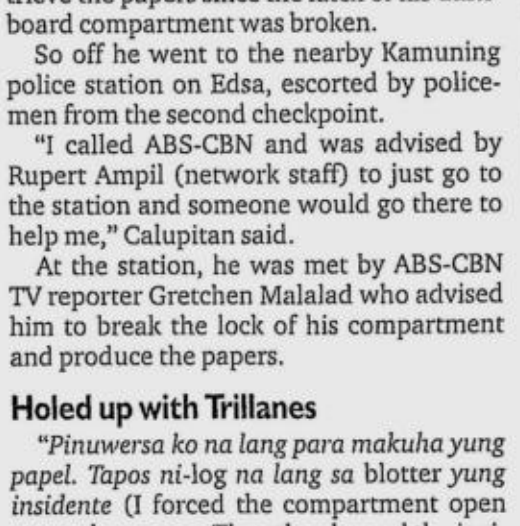
Harassment

The way the assault team treated the journalists, Calupitan said, was something short of harassment.

"They shouted at us: 'P— *niyo, media pala ha! Taas kamay* (So you're media! Hands in the air),'" he narrated, adding that they were ordered to drop to their knees and raise their arms although the room was filled with tear gas.

They were huddled together outside the hotel entrance for another 10 minutes before they were loaded into a bus bound for Bicutan, the trip lasting more than an hour.

The ABS-CBN crew was "processed" and then allowed to go home after Chari Villa, the network's head of news operations, and some lawyers talked to police investigators confirming the reporters' identities.



UNHOLY STINT: Bishop Emeritus Julio Labayen (center) of Infanta, Quezon, is released Friday afternoon from detention at Camp Crame.to the custody of Bishop Rolando Tirona (left) at the behest of Cardinal Rosales. JOAN BONDOC

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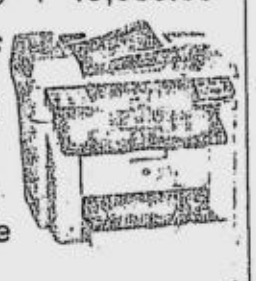

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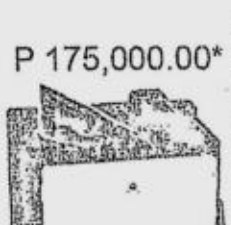

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Volcano scare in Biliran

By Rolando O. Borrinaga
Naval, Biliran

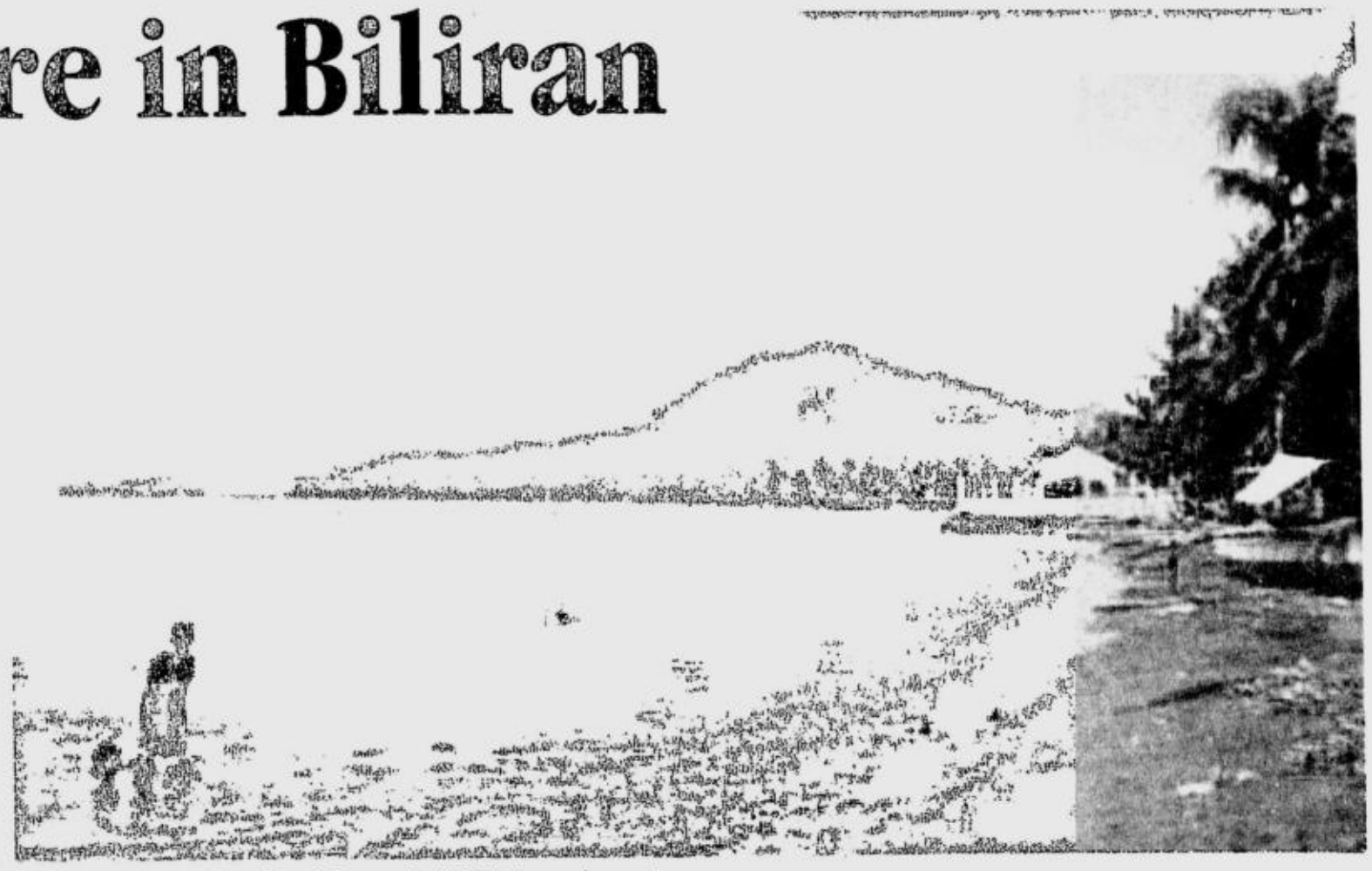
BILIRAN IS A VOLCANIC ISLAND, BUT there was nothing panicky about this fact until a local official allegedly predicted a volcanic eruption here after a recent earthquake.

Last Oct. 28, at 6:15 a.m., an Intensity 4.4 earthquake shook the vicinity of Biliran province and nearby towns. The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) located its epicenter at four kilometers southeast of Naval town.

It was actually the second earthquake on the same day in Eastern Visayas. A few hours earlier, at 2:21 a.m., an earthquake of similar intensity shook the province of Northern Samar, with its epicenter located 59 km southeast of Catarman.

The Phivolcs reported that these earthquakes were tectonic in origin. That is, they were caused by the shifting or movement of the earth's crust. (The other cause is volcanic, triggered by the underground forces of a volcano, including eruption.)

In the case of Biliran, the possible source of the recent earthquake was the Leyte segment of the Philippine Fault Zone. Its depth of focus at 10 km underground was classified as "shallow."



MT. PANAMAO in Biliran Island. Erupted in 1669, it is now dormant.

Some have reportedly left the area, after allegedly selling cheap their livestock and farm lots, to settle elsewhere while the perceived danger remained

Dire prediction

Two days later, Victor A. del Rosario Jr., a councilor of Naval who hosts a noon block-time program in the local Radyo Natin FM station, allegedly claimed on air that the earthquake signaled an impending eruption of the volcano in Biliran.

Feedback from radio listeners and blog exchanges in an Internet forum for Biliranons have it that the eruption was supposed to have occurred last Nov. 15 or 17.

Del Rosario reportedly alleged that a mysterious, hermit-like old man with that dire prediction requested him to broadcast his hunch to the public. He did not name this source.

Then an aftershock shook Naval at about 7 a.m. on Oct. 31. This time, the earthquake created a climate of fear and uncertainty that spread among local people who had heard the radio broadcast.

Panic reportedly gripped the residents of several upland barangays around Libtong area east of Naval near the present mouth of the only active volcano in Eastern Visayas. Some have reportedly left the area after allegedly selling cheap their livestock and farm lots, to settle elsewhere while the perceived danger remained.

The rumors and speculations soon took a life of their own and spilled into the Internet, in the www.biliranisland.com and the Hometown Naval websites.

Concerned and skeptical residents sought official verification of the rumors from their local politicians. Some sought the help of Biliran Gov. Rogelio Espina, but he was out of the country reportedly on a study leave in the US.

Others made calls or sent text messages to Biliran Rep. Glenn A. Chong. He has referred the issue to the Phivolcs, which officials promised to send personnel and equipment to monitor the status of the volcano in Biliran.

Chong likewise appealed for calm and sobriety among his constituents in Biliran. In an Internet blog, he chided Del Rosario for his "irresponsible" statements on radio that had caused panic among the local residents.

However, Del Rosario has denied making a broadcast about a volcanic eruption.

"That information is a handiwork of dirty politics purposely meant to damage my person," he said in a text message to the INQUIRER.

In a telephone interview, Michael Aguilos, the manager of Radyo Natin-Naval, denied having heard Del Rosario's controversial broadcast, though he said these are on tapes that he has yet to check. He said he has no control over the content of block-time programs.

But a staff of the Philippine Information Agency in Biliran, who requested anonymity, admitted having heard the broadcasts that Del Rosario was now denying.

Volcanic history

Many modern Biliranons became aware of the volcano in their midst only after the catastrophic eruption of Mt. Pinatubo in Zambales in June 1991. In its wake, Phivolcs publicized reports that Biliran Island has the lone active volcano in Eastern Visayas.

In subsequent years, this writer established from historical documents that of four volcanic eruptions in the Leyte-Samar region over the past 350 years, three occurred in different mountains of Biliran Island.

The outside eruption occurred in 1749 in Mt. Cantoctoc, north of old Cabalian, now comprising the towns of San Juan and St. Bernard, Southern Leyte. The latter town became internationally famous last year because of the Guinsaugon landslide, which buried at least a thousand residents.

The Global Volcanism Program (GVP) of the Smithsonian Institution in the US has identified the volcano in Biliran with the code number 0702-08. It is classified as a compound volcano, with several mountains as possible vents for eruption.

Geologists have various classifications of volcano status. One is "historical," and another is "anthropological." The volcano in Biliran is classified as historical, that is, documented during or shortly after observation, with its last known eruption dated Sept. 26, 1939.

The GVP website has it that the summit elevation of this volcano is 1,301 m; its latitude is 11.523°N or 11°31'24"N; and its longitude is 124.535°E or 124°32'6"E.

The description fits Mt. Suiro (Surio in the GVP website) in Caibiran town, the tallest peak southeast of the island, which became dormant after 1939.

An unnamed Internet blogger has it that the 1939 eruption was from the crater and that it caused an avalanche of debris and 6.35 cm. thick ashfall at Caibiran and adjoining areas.

Previous eruptions

The two previous eruptions of the volcano in Biliran are classified as "anthropological," that is, described in native legends.

Mt. Panamao is the first known volcano in Biliran, located northwest of the island. This was described as eruptive by Jesuit Fr. Francisco Alcina, who wrote in 1668 that he had "often seen the mountains on the island of Panamao [old name of Biliran] throwing out fire, especially on very dark and stormy nights."

This volcano presumably erupted in 1669, a year marked by "a rain of ashes" in Tacloban, about 130 km away. Its massive devastation presumably influenced the natives to change the name of the entire island from Panamao to Biliran, probably premised on the folk belief that this could waylay the bad spirits in the destructive volcano.

Mt. Panamao has been dormant since then.

The second eruption was said to have occurred in 1800. A petition in 1883 related to a local feud surrounding the poblacion transfer of Caibiran mentioned that the inhabitants experienced for two hours a volcanic eruption of the mountain in front of Tinagu (village and river), which had been throwing fire from its crater. In the same lapse of time, and with some horror, they saw rocks flying out of the crater and landing in far distances.

The crater of this volcano was apparently in the present Libtong Thermal Areas in central Biliran, comprising of one bubbling pool and several hot springs. It is 16 km southeast of Mt. Panamao and 9 km northwest of Mt. Suiro.

The adjacent slope of the mountain ridge facing Caibiran is known as Pulang Yuta (red soil), a key source of sulfur during the Spanish era.

The known volcanic eruptions in Biliran in 1669, 1800 and 1939 present a pattern that such event occurs in the island every 130 years or so. Thus, the next eruption could possibly happen decades from now in 2069, but not in 2007.

Funny

Del Rosario's alleged prophesy of doom mentioned the deaths of thousands of people in case of a volcanic eruption.

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A tale in the Tantuico family of Tacloban, who came from Caibiran, has it that when the nearby volcano erupted, the family members rushed out of their houses with few belongings, ran and positioned themselves inside a *basnigan* (a large outrigger boat used for trawl-fishing).

After everybody was accounted for, the family head shouted, "Larga! (Let's go!)"

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Army arrests NDF peace panel head

By Nikko Dizon *in Manila*
and Delfin Mallari Jr.
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LUCENA CITY—ARMED Forces Chief Gen. Hermogenes Esperon yesterday announced the arrest of a top communist leader, an arrest that was condemned by the National Democratic Front.

The NDF said Elizabeth Principe, chair of the NDF peace panel in the rebels' failed talks with the government, was seized at 11:20 a.m. in Cubao by eight government agents.

Esperon tagged Principe as the secretary general of the CPP-New People's Army (NPA) who has six warrants of arrest for kidnapping and murder charges.

Esperon said Principe, 56, was arrested in Cubao on Nov. 28.

Luis Jalandoni said Principe, married with two children and resident of Bongabong, Nueva Ecija, is protected by the GRP-NDFP Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (Jasig), as an NDF consultant in peace negotiations with the government.

Lorena Santos, Principe's daughter, told the INQUIRER in a phone interview that her mother was abducted contrary to the military's claim.

"They dragged her into a vehicle without apprising her of her rights," Santos said.

Santos said her mother had just seen a doctor for a medical examination when she was seized along P. Tuazon Avenue in front of Ali Mall.

Principe's husband, Leo Velasco, a suspected CPP-NPA leader, was abducted in February in Cagayan de Oro.

"Now I am looking for two parents," Santos said.

In a phone interview, military spokesperson Lt. Col. Bartolome Bacarro said Principe was arrested by the Army's 5th Infantry Division "based on the warrants of arrest."

The 5th ID is based in Gamu, Isabela.

The leftist human rights group Karapatan (Alliance for the Advancement of People's Rights) has recorded 869 extrajudicial killings and about 180 forced disappearances since Ms Arroyo took power in 2001 *With a report from Jerome Aning in Manila*

RAINCOATS FOR HORSES EV ESPIRITU/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

Pony boys in Baguio City used to make a killing as the holiday season draws near in the summer capital, but not this time. The rains forced them to wrap their valuable horses with makeshift raincoats until fair weather brings them customers.

No Gloria, no Nayong Pilipino opening at Clark

CLARK FREEPORT—PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo cancelled her visit to the Nayong Pilipino sa Clark at the Expo Pilipino here on Friday, prompting officials to call off the inaugural event.

An "expected bad weather," not the so-called rebellion in Makati City, was behind the change in schedule, according to Cris Cadiang, coordinator of the government-led Nayong Pilipino Foundation.

"The board advised the President not to come because bad weather was expected in the area," Cadiang said. It was sunny in Clark on Friday morning, though.

"In fact, the President wanted to push through with the opening," he said.

She was supposed to lead the rites scheduled at 10 a.m.

The Nayong Pilipino sa Clark occupies 13 hectares in the 60-hectare Expo Pilipino. It reuses the pre-colonial and colonial plazas of the Expo, which the Ramos administration built for the centennial of Philippine independence in 1998.

The foundation spent P40 million to improve the place and put in new attractions.

The rest of the P3-billion Expo Pilipino remained unused, its business viability hobbled by allegations of corruption unearthed during the Estrada administration.

Former President Joseph Estrada ordered the park closed in 1999 and Ms Arroyo tried to turn it into an economic enterprise.

Cadiang said the opening has been reset to Dec. 12. *Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon*

Judges slam House cut of courts' budget

BAYOMBONG, NUEVA VIZCAYA—Regional trial court judges here on Thursday assailed the budget cut proposed by the House of Representatives which, when approved, would slash more than P4 billion from the fund allocation for the judiciary.

Judge Fernando Flor, president of the Philippine Judges Association (PJA) in the province, said the slash in funds for trial courts from the proposed P1.227-trillion national budget for 2008 was "unreasonable."

Flor, also director of the PJA in Northern Luzon, said the P13-billion budget proposed by court officials to the House has been reduced to about P8 billion.

He expressed disgust that the judiciary was left with less than 1 percent of the national budget.

"Our budget has been slashed for no apparent reason. This [fund lack] is leading us to mendicancy already," Flor said.

He said the decreasing funds given to the judiciary have been forcing judges and court personnel to solicit money from various sources, commonly local governments, for basic court needs. *Melvin Gascon, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

Alston 'one-sided,' says Army general

By Joey A. Gabieta
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—A TOP ARMY official in Eastern Visayas described as "one-sided" the report of the United Nations special rapporteur saying the military had a direct hand in extrajudicial killings in the country.

Major Gen. Armando Cunanan, commanding general of the 8th Infantry Division based in Catbalogan City in Samar, said the report of Philip Alston was unfair to the Philippine Army.

"He never met any official of the (Philippine) Army in the provinces," said Cunanan.

"His report was very partial against us and has no basis at all," said Cunanan.

Cunanan said he was informed that Alston had wanted to visit a mass grave in Inopacan, Leyte but it didn't take place.

"For some reason, he never went to the area," said Cunanan.

The military had discovered the alleged mass grave last year in Sitio Sapang Daku, Inopacan, containing 67 skeletal remains of alleged victims of a communist purge.

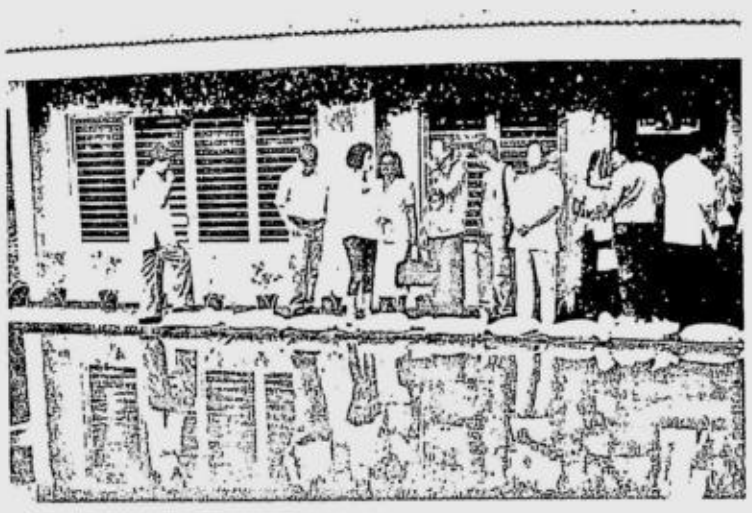
Flooded Pampanga school draws attention

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

MASANTOL, PAMPANGA—Flooded for most times of the year, the San Isidro Elementary School here became the butt of jokes of two Cabinet secretaries on Thursday.

In his speech, Public Works Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. called it a "school of fisheries."

"Fishpond" might be the better term, said Education Secretary Jesli Lapus when he took his turn to speak on the rostrum.



GOVERNMENT officials walk on sandbags and wooden stilts to get to the San Isidro Elementary School. TONETTE OREJAS/INQUIRER CENTRAL LUZON

Sagging bridge

To reach the school, Ebdane and Lapus crossed a concrete bridge that, while able to withstand the rampaging waters from a river nearby, sagged.

They next walked through an alley where they stood like giants. This was so because the residents waved at Ebdane and Lapus from floors that were lower by almost two meters from the road's height.

At the school compound that looked every inch like a swamp, the secretaries tread on sandbags and wooden stilts to reach the new school building and three classrooms that they inaugurated that day.

It was one of two buildings spared from the floodwaters that reached knee-deep.

Two other buildings were swamped with stagnant waters. The stage's floor was among the few places that were dry that day.

Classrooms in San Isidro are among the 63,000 classrooms all over the country that need repair or total reconstruction, Lapus told the INQUIRER.

At least P45 billion was needed to improve those, he added, citing World Bank's estimates.

In the 2008 budget, the government allotted P5 billion to build new classrooms, he said.

The Department of Education maintains 420,000 classrooms in public schools in the country.

Mt. Pinatubo's eruptions in 1991 and lahar (mudflows) carried by rains at the mouth of the Manila Bay had worsened the floods in the coastal towns of Masantol, Macabebe and Minalin, said Pampanga Rep. Anna York Bondoc.

"In the rehabilitation that followed, our schools were the last to be repaired or improved," she said.

DPWH savings

The project "Retrieval of infrastructures for education and sanitation facilities," conceptualized by Emil Sadain, former Mt. Pinatubo Emergency Office chief in the Department of Public Works and Highways, and former Pampanga Rep. Juan Pablo Bondoc in 2001, got off only in January 2007.

From out of its savings, the DPWH managed to scrimp P48.8 million to build 18 school buildings in the three towns.

Like the one in San Isidro, each building has a total floor area of 189 square meters and is divided into three classrooms. Each building has a toilet and lavatory, electricity and water systems.

Tina Santos, a teacher here for 33 years, has been pushing for flood-free schools.

Perfect attendance

"The floods here last throughout the year but we do not miss a class. We teach even when the water is up to our legs," Santos, 56, said.

She said parents carry their children to school. The more than 600 students here sit on their desks during class hours, she said.

"No one wears shoes anymore when they go to school," she added.

A colleague, Gil Lacap, wears rubber boots all of the time.

"The water is low today," he said.

Floodwaters can get as high as two meters, especially when dams on the eastern side release excess water.

Another colleague, Rosalia Viray, rued the fact that her students are using the same classrooms where she studied, referring to a building built after World War II.

Isabelita Aniciete said she used the same classrooms when she taught as an intern.

NEWSBRIEFS

Reward for bombers up to P100,000

KIDAPAWAN CITY—A P100,000 reward is out for any information leading to the arrest of other suspects in the Oct. 22 mall bombing that left one person dead and six others wounded.

Mayor Rodolfo Gantuangco ordered the release of the bounty for anyone who could provide information that could lead to the arrests of the companions of Hassan Majalidin Sulaik and Alex Sanduyugan.

Edwin O. Fernandez, Inquirer Mindanao

Hero cop killed by robbers

COTABATO CITY—A police officer, due to retire in January, was killed by two suspected robbers inside a public utility jeep here Tuesday night.

Supt. Willie Dangane, city police director, said SPO4 Winifred Gipala, radio operator of the city police office, died of gunshot wounds in the back that exited his chest.

Dangane said Gipala was on his way to the downtown area at about 9 p.m. when he noticed two men with handguns tucked in their waists.

While he was trying to disarm one suspect, the other suspect pulled a gun and shot Gipala in the back.

Edwin O. Fernandez, Inquirer Mindanao

Davao top doc dies

DAVAO CITY—Dr. Gerardo Cunanan, chief of hospital of the Davao Medical Center here, died of cardiac arrest on Nov. 27.

He was 59.

Cunanan graduated from the University of the Philippines College of Medicine. He became a resident at the Philippine General Hospital before returning to Davao and joined the Davao Medical Center in 1989. He became chief of hospital from 1992 until his death.

He is survived by his wife Edith and children, Althea Joyce, Sheila Grace, Ed Gerald and Samantha.

His body lies at the DMC Wellness Center, 2nd Floor. Interment is scheduled on Dec. 4 at the Davao Memorial Park.

Joselle Badilla, Inquirer Mindanao

3 drown in Cagayan River

TUGUEGARAO CITY—Three farmers drowned on Nov. 27 when their boat capsized in the Cagayan River, police said.

Police said Pacifico Ramos, Leon Ranes and Johnny Quintos, all of San Pablo, Isabela, were searching for their carabaos that were carried away by the river current when their boat overturned.

Estanislao Caldez, Inquirer Northern Luzon

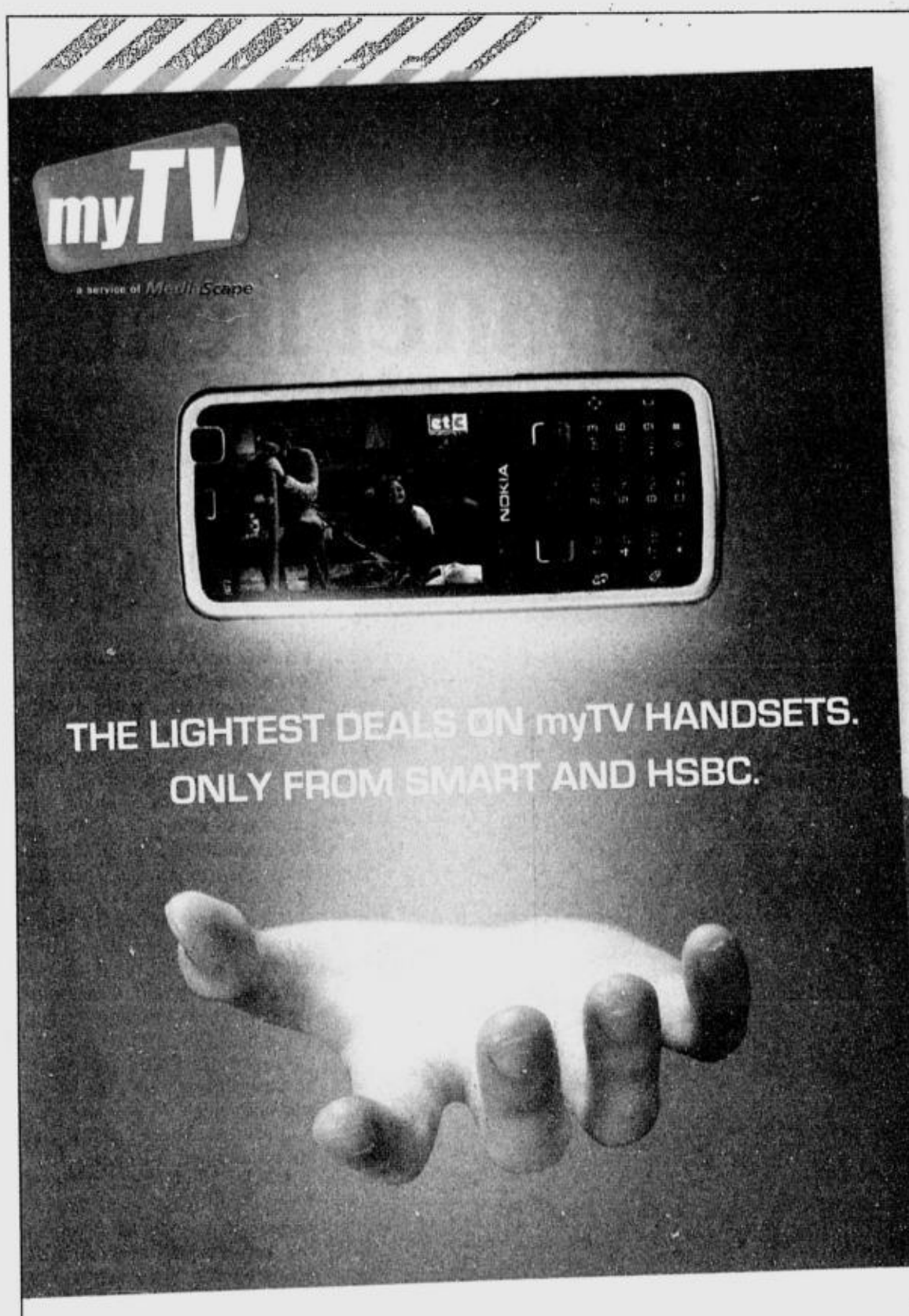
Archivists' workshop in Baguio

THE SOCIETY of Filipino Archivists will hold a seminar-workshop on Safeguarding Institutional Records and Archives in Baguio City on Dec. 10-12 at the Hotel Supreme Convention Plaza.

The workshop aims to help participants understand the basic principles of archiving, know the tools in building appraisal systems and make records retention and disposition schedule.

They will also learn to use the tools in organizing records and archives and gain awareness of risk assessment tools.

For more details, contact Emma M. Rey—fax 9315566/e-mail—emmamrey@yahoo.com; Ma. Teresa S. Bondoc—fax 5526764/ e-mail—dirbondoc@yahoo.com; Sarah T. Moscosa—fax 9315864/e-mail—sarahmoscosa@yahoo.com.



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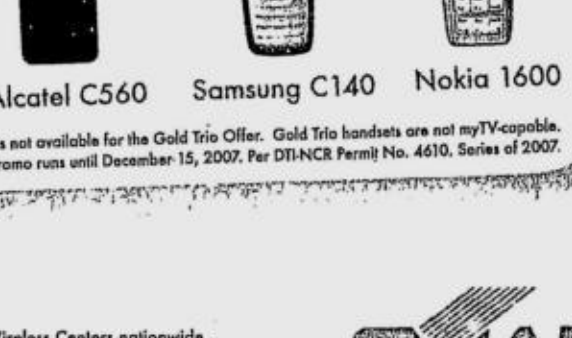

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SPORTS

LEO NAJORDA plays a pivotal role anew for the rampaging Red Bull squad. PDI PHOTO

More Sports, including SEA Games, on A23-A26

Magnolia rips Purefoods; Red Bull wins

GAMES TODAY (*Quezon Convention Center, Lucena City*)
4:30 p.m.—Coca-Cola vs Sta. Lucia Realty
6:50 p.m.—Barangay Ginebra vs Alaska

By June Navarro

ANTIPOLO CITY—THE LAW OF AVERAGES finally caught up with the Purefoods TJ Giants.

Magnolia's remarkable outside shooting brought the league-leading Giants down to their knees as the Beverage Masters pulled off an easy 108-86 win last night in the Smart-PBA Philippine Cup.

Expecting a down-the-wire contest, the full-house crowd at the Ynares Center here was instead treated to a blowout that started when the Beverage Masters broke into a shooting frenzy right in the first half.

Danny Seigle was simply unstoppable at the perimeter while Chris Calaguio, Olsen Racela and Lordy Tugade unloaded successive three-pointers that lifted the Beverage Masters to a 52-35 spread and set the tone for the rout.

Even Enrico Villanueva and Eman Samigue did their share in the paint for the Beverage Masters, who sent the Giants to only their second defeat after nine victories.

"We've struggled in the first round," said Magnolia coach Siot Tanquingcen after the Beverage Masters avenged a Purefoods defeat in the first round and picked up a sixth win in nine outings.

"If we want to get somewhere, we must make the players realize that they have to be consistent in the second round," said Tanquingcen, whose Beverage Masters led by as many as 38 points in the fourth period.

Earlier, Red Bull sustained its hot streak behind Cyrus Baguio and Leo Najorda, blasting Air21, 108-95, to improve their second-running card to 7-3.

Baguio slashed his way to a game-high 27 points to carry the Bulls to their fourth consecutive victory.

"Everybody's making a contribution by playing their respective roles. Someone steps up every game aside from veteran players Mick (Pennisi), Junthy (Valenzuela) and Cyrus," added Guiao.

Najorda was the surprise package for the Bulls, drilling in 12 of his 18 points in the third quarter as the Bulls held off an Express squad that came to life in the second half.

The scores:

First Game

RED BULL 108—Baguio 27, Najorda 18, Valenzuela 14, Hrabak 8, Duncil 7, Robinson 6, Pennisi 6, Andaya 5,Bugia 5, Ybañez 5, Membrere 4, Sharma 3.

AIR21 95—Santos 19, Se 16, De Ocampo 15, Canaleta 14, Chia 10, Kramer 6, Sotto 6, Arboleda 5, Cruz 3, Baluyot 1, Intal 0.

Quarters: 26-23, 51-40, 81-67, 108-95

Second Game

MAGNOLIA 108—Calaguio 22, Seigle 18, E. Villanueva 16, Racela 11, Eman 10, Wilson 7, Ildefonso 7, Tugade 6, Hontiveros 5, Tenorio 4, Espinas 2, J. Villanueva 0.

PUREFOODS 86—Lanete 19, Yap 17, Salvador 9, Raymundo 9, Simon 8, Pingris 7, Sanz 6, Yee 4, Cablay 3, Evangelista 3, Adducul 1, Larong 0.

Quarters: 28-14, 59-31, 84-54, 108-86

Comets, Road Kings dispute quarterfinal bonus today

GAME TODAY (*The Arena, San Juan*)
3 p.m.—Mail and More vs Toyota Balintwak

THE LAST QUARTERFINAL BONUS WILL be up for grabs when Mail and More and Toyota Balintawak clash today in V-Go Extreme Energy Drink Cup at The Arena in San Juan.

The Comets and the Road Kings square off for the twice-to-beat incentive at 3 p.m.

Nearly out of contention for the bonus, the Comets earned another chance by winning their last pool round game, while the Road Kings surprisingly dropped their own assignment.

"It's not about excellence, it's having the right kind of thinking," said Comets coach Allan Gregorio. "I don't want to make it hard on my players. They know what's in store for them."

It is a virtual best-of-three series between the two squads since they will meet again in the quarterfinal round beginning Dec. 18.

Third-ranked San Mig Coffee, the first to claim the quarterfinal privilege, will tangle against No. 6 Pharex in the other pairing.

Quarterfinal winners will go up against unbeaten Hapee and Harbour Centre, which dominated the first two rounds to clinch outright semifinal berths.

"We're no longer talking about our offense; offense follows after a good defense," said Gregorio after his Comets nipped the Medics, 75-70, last Thursday to forge a playoff.

Despite lamenting the missed opportunity to nail the bonus, coach Ariel Vanguardia expects his Road Kings to recover from the 71-51 "nightmare loss" versus the eliminated Bacchus Raiders.

The Comets and the Road Kings, who wound up with similar 5-5 records, also split their two previous encounters.

Guards Marcy Arellano and Khiel Misa shone as the Comets repulsed the Road Kings, 81-74, in the eliminations.

But the Road Kings evened up matters with Erwin Sta. Maria, JV Casio and Erick Rodriguez leading them to a 78-66 triumph in the pool round.

Meanwhile, the league will take a break starting tomorrow until Dec. 17 to give way to the PBL stars suiting up for the Harbour-Philippine Team in the Southeast Asian Games. *Jasmine W. Payo*

Delariarte matches 72, stays 9 off lead

SIEM REAP, CAMBODIA—JEROME DELARIARTE MATCHED PAR 72 IN THE SECOND ROUND and remained in contention for a top 20 finish in the inaugural Johnnie Walker Cambodian Open Friday. Delariarte, who shot a 70 in the first round, was at 2-under par 142, nine strokes behind joint leaders Adam Groom of Australia (65-68) and Bryan Saltus of the US (66-67). Mars Pucay and Gerald Rosales made it to the weekend play after making the halfway cut of 146. Rosales rallied with a 71 while Pucay also had a 72. Tony Lascuña bowed out with rounds of 74-75.

Asian Tour News

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Silent night in Metro Manila

By Tarra Quismundo

FOR FIVE HOURS YESTERDAY, Metro Manila was silent as a ghost town.

Gone was the chatter of yuppies in coffee shops as brewing machines "retired" for the night. Even the sound of tipsy singing accompanied by the blare of P5-per-song videoke machines was missed.

In a metropolis that is awake 24/7, nightlife flatlined yesterday as city-dwellers experienced curfew hours for the first time in 35 years.

The imposition of curfew hours was an aftermath of a six-hour standoff at the Manila Peninsula, one of the country's most expensive hotels, between renegade soldiers and police and military troops.

Never has the start of a long weekend—yesterday being a holiday—been so eerily quiet and empty.

"Nobody has complained so far. If only people could always be this obedient," said PO3 Joel Boto while manning a checkpoint on C-5 Road in Makati City at 3:45 a.m.

Metro Manila observed a curfew after then president Ferdinand Marcos placed the entire nation under martial law in September 1972.

It was tough for a metropolis where the last full show in movie houses ended past midnight and coffee is served until before dawn.

But with the exception of a few who were briefly detained for missing the announcement of curfew hours, it seemed the population chose to follow the rules.

Streetlights along the streets of Ermita and Malate in Manila were on throughout the night, but nobody went out to party. It was probably the first time the usually boisterous resto row on Remedios Circle was empty.

The few seen having coffee at Café Adriatico were all policemen.

The bar and restaurant strip in the prime "gimmick" spot looked forlorn. Streets filled with al-fresco diners were empty. Even street dwellers were nowhere to be seen.

Roxas Boulevard glowed with its colorful lights, but there was no one around enjoying a stroll by Manila Bay. Bars and restaurants across had shut down for the night.

Though a few establishments were open, there were no patrons, just security guards.

SILENT/ A20

BONIFACIO DAY AT HERO'S BIRTHPLACE
Manila city government and National Historical Institute officers, along with Tutuban Mall personnel, offer a wreath at the 144th birth anniversary of working class hero Andres Bonifacio, also known as the founder of the Katipunan. Tutuban is Bonifacio's birthplace. From left are Councilor Numero Uno Lim, Ding Espiritu-VP-Sales and Marketing Tutuban Mall, Joseph Lim-Primblock Traders Association Officer, General Rodolfo Diaz-Executive Secretary, Office of the Mayor, Jojo Dy-PTA President, Joven Chua-PTA Officer and Romeo Salcay of the National Historical Institute. EDWIN BACASMAS

Curfew catches people by surprise

Confusion leads to arrest of call center workers; others unaware of imposition

By Abigail L. Ho, Leila B. Salaverria, Norman Bordadora, Jeannette I. Andrade, Tonette Orejas and Alcuin Papa

SOME WORKERS IN THE CALL CENTER INDUSTRY were detained because of confusion arising from the imposition of the 12-5 a.m. curfew yesterday.

A source from one of the larger call centers in the country said some of their agents were caught on the streets during curfew time.

The agents were apprehended even though they presented identification cards and explained they were on their way home or to work.

"Management advised us about the curfew, but we were also told that all we had to do was present our IDs. However, some agents were still detained (including) one of our supervisors," the source, who declined to be identified, said.

Malacañang, through the Department of Interior and Local Government, announced the curfew Thursday night, following a standoff in Makati City between a group headed by Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV and Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim and police and military units.

In its guidelines, the Philippine National Police said the curfew covered Metro Manila, Region 3 and Region 4-A, with some exemptions.

Nightshift workers like call center employees were among those exempted, provided they had proper IDs.

TeleTech, which has about 15,000 employees, advised workers to come to work early, particularly those whose shifts fell during curfew hours.

TeleTech vice president and general manager for Asia Maulik Parekh said that despite the curfew, it was "business as usual." The company has facilities in Pasay City, Novaliches in Quezon City, Cainta in Rizal, Lipa City in Batangas and Bacoor in Cavite.

Meanwhile, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said the curfew was not a martial law tactic.

He said there was a very big difference between curfew now and during martial law. In Ferdinand Marcos' time, Gonzalez said there were also arrest and seizure orders.

Civil rights were curtailed and the writ of habeas corpus suspended during martial law.

Gonzalez said these would not be possible under the present Constitution even if martial law was declared.

He said the curfew was imposed only to aid follow-up operations against those behind the Manila Peninsula siege. Trillanes, who led the siege, is facing *coup d'etat* charges for the July 2003 mutiny of junior military officers.

PNP Chief Director General Avelino Razon, however, said there was no reason to re-impose the curfew. "We're back to normal," he added. Interior Undersecretary Marius Corpus also said there was no need for the curfew since police had accounted for most of the suspects in the uprising.

Media practitioners covering

CURFEW/ A20

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2007 7

PEOPLES HOMEPAGE

Pasig muling pinarangalan sa programang pangkalusugan.

Metro Manila Thursday, Septembe

Pasig City named among to accounting offices in Philippine

accuracy, completeness, and quality of accounting report.

Pasig is one of two Metro Manila Cities to receive the award. The other one being Las Piñas who joins the rest of the awardees on the national level. Other recipients are the cities Tanauan (Batangas), Cauayan (Isabela), Batangas City (Batangas), and Bago City (Negros Occidental).

"I am proud of the accounting office's achievement led by its Accountant Marita Calaje and her staff for this fitting recognition," Mayor Eusebio said.

Eusebio said the citation speaks well of his goal for an efficient and well managed public funds where the best part of the budget goes to the basic services like health, education, environment and infrastructure.

He said this inspires him to pursue all the more his flagship projects.

EUSEBIO

were chosen by COA the local government offices and departments on its strictest crite accuracy, timeliness and of accounting reports.

Civil Service Commission

in the implementation of t

PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY AUDIT PROJECT

CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION

Community Tax Section
Treasury Department
PASIG CITY GOVERNMENT

KARINA CONSTANTINO-DAVID

ANICIA MARASIGAN DE LIMA

Masayang Maglingkod sa Pasig!

MALUNGGAY IN THE CITY

Urban farmers can grow wonder tree

By Amy R. Remo

FIGHTING HUNGER, POVERTY and malnutrition could start with something as simple as growing a tree.

The Department of Agriculture yesterday led in the launching of "Malunggay in the City," an urban farming program designed to empower poor communities in Metro Manila.

A joint project of the DA, Aktibong Kapatiran Tungo sa Ilsang Bayan and the Asian Center for Grassroots Communication and Advocacy, the program aims to promote the backyard planting of *malunggay* or *moringa* (ben oil tree) in the city.

The DA has already identified 14 barangays in five cities and one municipality in Metro Manila as pilot areas for the project.

Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap said this program will also be launched soon in urban poor communities of Metro Iloilo, Metro Davao, Metro Naga and other metropolitan areas in the country, including Zamboanga del Norte.

Through the program, these communities will receive *malunggay* seedlings from the DA which they can plant in their backyards or any available land plot in their barangays.

The program can help towns achieve a better quality of life and better health because of the crop's outstanding nutritional and medicinal value, the DA said, adding that it can likewise help create greener urban communities.

The planting of *malunggay* will initially be carried out in 12 Metro areas including Barangays Commonwealth, Payatas and Pinyahan in Quezon City; Bagong Silang, Camarin, Tala Bukid Area and Malaria in Caloocan City; Addition Hills in Mandaluyong City; San Antonio in Makati City; Ba-Nangka and Parang in Marikina City and Sta. Ana in the municipality of Pateros.

Malunggay leaves are naturally rich in vitamins C and A, calcium, protein, iron and potassium and are also used for medicinal purposes.

DEPARTMENT of Agriculture-Bureau of Plant Industry Director Joel Rudinas (right) and Ernesto Ofracio, an urban poor group leader plant a *malunggay* seedling at the launching yesterday of a program promoting backyard farming. MANMAN DEJETO

Here we go again

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

I HATE TO SAY THIS TO THE 11 million voters who installed Antonio Trillanes IV in the Senate: I told you so!

You didn't think twice before writing the guy's name in your ballots.

You voted for a man who has delusions of grandeur, thinking that only he can save the country from President Gloria.

You installed a spoiled brat in the Senate and the whole country is suffering the consequences of your decision.

* * *

Of course, the votes for Trillanes in the last elections were votes against abusive and corrupt governance, but it was a case of jumping from the frying pan into the fire.

I'm sorry, folks, for bringing up your mistake, but it hurts.

I know how it feels to be told of one's mistake rooting for the wrong guy.

I'm reminded of a mistake I made taking up the cudgels for a person whose power and influence eventually got to his head.

This person is not even a government official.

* * *

Senator Trillanes was treated like a common criminal by his police captors as he was being led out of the Peninsula Hotel, but many didn't mind.

He deserved that kind of treatment for destroying a beautiful hotel, scaring the wits out of its occupants, and holding the country and economy hostage.

* * *

I've been writing about Trillanes' abusive and hypocritical ways after a couple who alleged that he grabbed their property in Quezon City before the Oakwood Mutiny on July 27, 2003 came to me.

If what they say is true, the senator is not the underdog and defender of the people that he projects himself to be.

If he were a defender of the people he wouldn't have taken over a property belonging to a couple who worked hard overseas to buy it.

The couple alleged that when he took over the property, he had armed goons, presumably soldiers, in tow.

Trillanes reportedly introduced himself not as a military officer but as a businessman during that occasion.

When he ran for the Senate, Trillanes indicated that he lived in Caloocan City.

But it has been alleged that he resides in a millionaires' village in Antipolo City.

In detention, I learned that Trillanes and his Oakwood buddies were used to having his way.

He and his friends reportedly held parties with their families inside the jail at the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces (Isafp) in Camp Aguinaldo.

Trillanes was reported to have once challenged to a fight a captain who was in charge of the guards at the Marine brig (jail) in Fort Bonifacio, who just followed orders that did not allow him to receive visits from outsiders.

* * *

The shabby handling by police of media people who covered the Peninsula Hotel siege was a first in the history of Philippine journalism.

Crime reporters who covered hostage-taking and plane hijacking incidents even in the unlamented martial law years were left alone to do their job by the police and military.

Even the much-feared Col. Rolando Abadilla of the defunct Metropolitan Command (Metrocom) didn't arrest journalists who got in the way of a hostage-taking incident at a bank in Cubao, Quezon City.

The police and the media, controlled as they were by the Marcos government at the time, had a healthy respect for each other.

How ironic that in democratic times like now the police have become undemocratic in their ways.

METROBRIEFS

Bird watchers race, exhibit

THE RECREATIONAL Outdoor Exchange (ROX) and the Wild Bird Club of the Philippines (WBCP) have organized an event called "The ROX Bird Race Challenge" which starts at 3 p.m. today and ends tomorrow at 3 p.m. Ten teams of bird watchers will comb Metro Manila's remaining green spaces, wetlands, grasslands and parks to spot and record as many bird species as possible within a 24-hour period. Bird species recorded in Metro Manila number more than 100 at this time of year, when migrants from mainland Asia and Japan stay for the duration of winter. "The teams will be composed of experienced bird watchers, nature lovers and first-time adventure racers," says WBCP president and race coordinator Michael Lu. "We expect an exciting race and a good number of bird arrivals based on our initial surveys and bird counts," says WBCP board member and urban planner Anna Gonzales. There will also be a series of activities on Sunday, 2 p.m. at Bonifacio High Street, The Fort in Taguig City. There will be environmental exhibits, lectures, face-painting for children and a wildlife conservation show featuring animals from the DENR Wildlife Rescue Center. For more information, visit ROX at Building 1, Bonifacio High Street. Or call 856-4638, 856-4639 or e-mail Michael Lu at myckle@thenet.ph.

Flower arrangement workshop reset

THE FLOWER arrangement workshop to be conducted by Ikebana expert Serapion S. Metilla originally scheduled for Dec. 5-9 has been reset to Dec. 12-16. It will be held from 1 to 6 p.m. at Metts Plant Arts, King Louis Garden Center, Manila Seedling Bank corner Edsa and Quezon Avenue, Quezon City. The workshop includes lectures and demonstrations on Ikebana, garland-making, floral arrangements for special occasions like weddings or Christmas, tips on sourcing of materials and lengthening the vase life of plants and flower shop operations, among others. All materials like pruning scissors, flower vases, flowers and foliage are included in the workshop fee, along with snacks, hand-outs and certificates. For more details, contact tel. nos. 939-4593/435-2479 or cell no. 0917-8321352. You may also e-mail metts-plants@yahoo.com.ph.

Quezon City hall to set up OFW desk

By Jeannette I. Andrade

QUEZON CITY MAYOR FELICIANO BELmonte Jr. has ordered the establishment of a unit to assist overseas workers in properly managing their remittances.

Belmonte directed the city's industrial relations office-public employment services office (IRO-PESO), the social services development department (SSDD), the Sikap Buhay, and the cooperative center to fast track the setting up of the Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) desk in city hall.

To initiate the measure, the IRO-PESO and the SSDD have been tapped to determine the actual number of OFWs residing in the city for programs that would help them spend hard-earned money wisely.

Vice Mayor Herbert Bautista said it was imperative for the city government to protect the families of OFWs from needless spending and to advice them on wise investments instead, claiming that the majority do not know how to invest their money.

Bautista also spearheaded a signature campaign for overseas worker Marilou Ranario, a domestic worker in Kuwait who was sentenced to die by hanging for killing her employer. Ranario was a resident of Area 1, Republic Avenue in Barangay Holy Spirit.

Bautista's initiative was supported by the 26-member city council.

The council will submit to the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Kuwait Embassy its position asking that Ranario be spared from ending up like Flor Contemplacion, a domestic helper who was executed in Singapore more than a decade ago.

Baby needs financial help

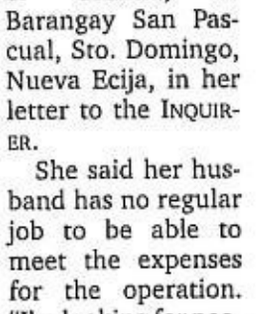
LEMUEL MARCELO was born more than a year ago with a mass of flesh protruding between his eyes.

His attending physicians at the Philippine Children's Medical Center on Quezon Avenue in Quezon City, told the baby's mother that her child has meningocoele.

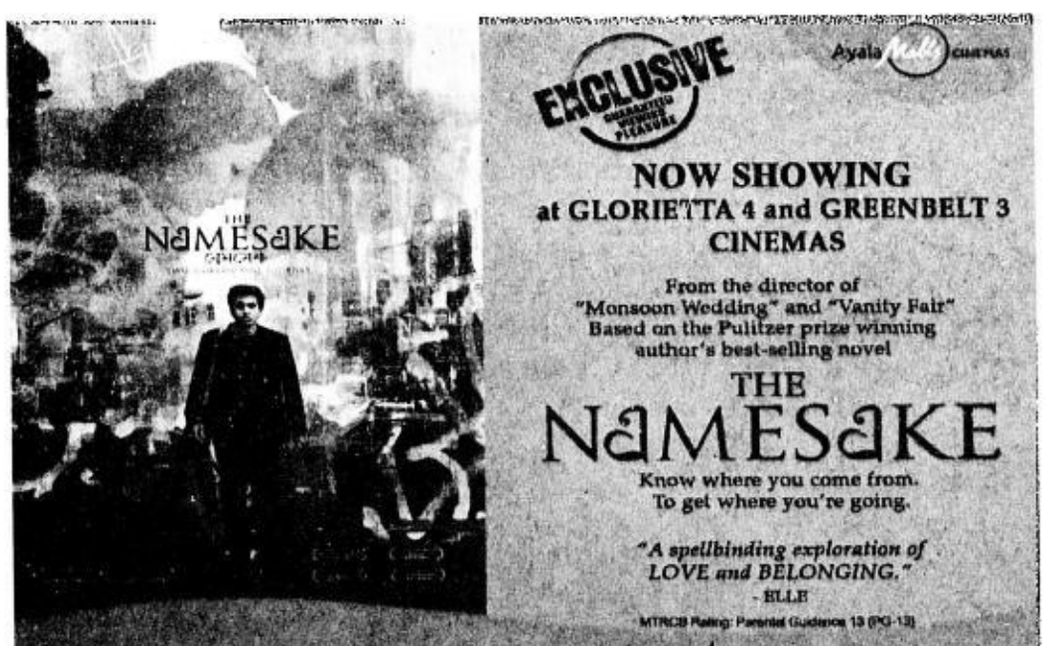
"It gets bigger and bigger by the day and I pity my youngest child," said Lemuel's mother Gemma, of Barangay San Pascual, Sto. Domingo, Nueva Ecija, in her letter to the INQUIRER.

She said her husband has no regular job to be able to meet the expenses for the operation. "I'm looking for people who would be kind enough to help us," she said.

Lemuel is scheduled for an operation today at PCMC. Please contact Gemma at 414-2421 or on her cell number 0921-9841432. Financial aid can be deposited at her Landbank account number 3106-0129-10. *Santiago R. Alcantara*



MARCELO



Curfew catches people . . . From page A19

the Peninsula incident who were brought to a police camp would only be liable if they were found to have been involved in the incident, the justice secretary added.

Meanwhile, the chair of the House committee on human rights said yesterday the curfew was both unconstitutional and unnecessary.

Quezon Rep. Lorenzo Tañada III, a lawyer and chair of the House human rights panel, said the imposition of curfew hours was a violation of human rights. He said the installation of checkpoints on the streets of Metro Manila and nearby areas would have sufficed.

Parañaque Rep. Roilo Golez, deputy minority leader in the House, concurred, saying it impeded the movement of more than 15 million Filipinos in Metro Manila, Central Luzon and Southern Tagalog.

Bayan Muna Rep. Teodoro Casiño agreed the curfew was unconstitutional "because there is no law that allows the impairment of a person's right to travel."

Administration congressmen, however, defended the curfew. Albay Rep. Edcel Lagman, chair of the House committee on appropriations, said it "was for the protection of the state." Davao City Rep. Prospero Nograles said it was meant to prevent further damage.

In Quezon City, the police arrested 147 people for alleged violation of the curfew. Most of those arrested, 15 of whom had bladed weapons, firearms and ammunition, claimed they were unaware of the curfew.

QC Police District Director Senior Supt. Magtanggol Gatdula said of the 147 persons charged, 12 were charged for possession of bladed weapons. Three men carrying guns were released after showing permits to carry firearms outside their homes.

At least 602 people, mostly men, were held in Central Luzon Friday for curfew violation. The police arrested 236 violators in Bataan, 134 in Bulacan, 68 in Nueva Ecija, 127 in Pampanga, 32 in Tarlac and five in Zambales.

Silent night in Metro Manila From page A19

Twenty-four hour convenience stores remained open, but there were no customers. A few 24-hour fastfood chains had no choice but to close their doors.

Upscale nightspots at The Fort in Taguig City were also closed. There was not a single car in sight.

In the densely populated port area in Manila, only truckers were busy. Shanties along R-10 Road were closed for the night. Pedicabs were lined up near intersections, their drivers gone, no doubt waiting for daylight.

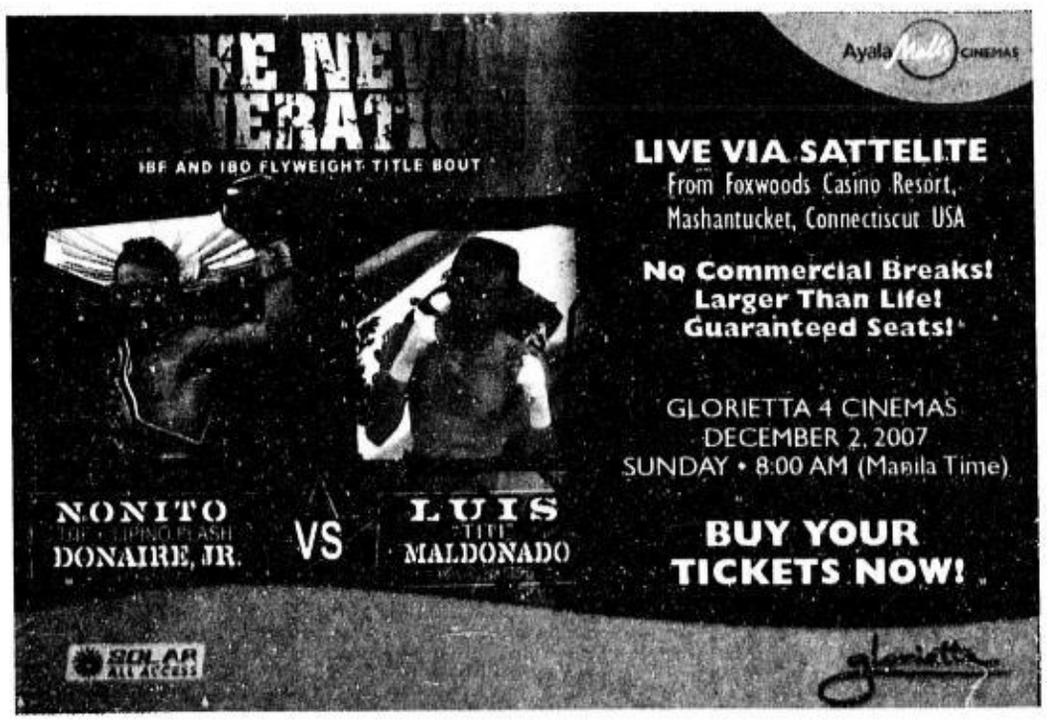
The major thoroughfares Edsa, C-5 Road and Taft were clear of both vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Only media vehicles, taxi cabs, trucks and a few private vehicles were out on the road.

Some cabbies wasted fuel futilely searching for passengers. Others decided to just wait until the curfew was lifted, parking along empty streets, easements and gasoline stations.

Many parked their cabs along TM Kalaw Avenue near Rizal Park that the place looked like a taxi depot.

There were a few signs of activity: an ambulance on McKinley Road, call center workers on a cigarette break near their building on Ayala Avenue, and policemen and soldiers guarding Manila Peninsula.

At checkpoints, policemen checked identification cards, most of which belonged to call center employees. People catching early flights or going to the provinces were also checked.



SEX FOR CHARITY
Maria Carolina, a Chilean prostitute, has auctioned 27 hours of sex to raise money for the country's largest charity during an annual fund-raising campaign. She became an overnight celebrity in the conservative Roman Catholic country, making news headlines and appearing on talk shows since she made her unusual donation to the televised charity event, which runs for 27 hours. REUTERS

Teen accused of cracking 1.3M computers, skimming millions

WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND—POLICE QUESTIONED the suspected teenage kingpin of an international cyber crime network accused of infiltrating 1.3 million computers and skimming millions of dollars from victims' bank accounts, officials said Friday.

Working with the FBI and police in the Netherlands, New Zealand police raided the home of the 18-year-old in the North Island city of Hamilton and took him into custody along with several computers, said Martin Kleintjes, head of the police electronic crime center. He was later released without charge after being questioned, though police said he was still part of their investigation.

The case is part of an international crackdown on hackers who allegedly assume control of thousands of computers and amass them into centrally controlled clusters known as botnets. The hackers can then use the computers to steal credit card information, manipulate stock trades and even crash industry computers, authorities say.

Eight people have been indicted, pleaded guilty or have been convicted since the investigation started in June. Thirteen additional warrants have been served in the US and overseas in the investigation.

The FBI estimates that more than one million computers have been infected and puts the combined economic losses at more than $20 million.

The New Zealander, known by his cyber identification as "Akill," was "head of an international spybot ring that has infiltrated computers round the world with their malicious software," Kleintjes told National Radio.

Kleintjes told The Associated Press the teenager, whose name was not released because he was under 18 when the alleged offenses began, was cooperating with investigators in telling them how the crime system works.

"We have seized a number of computers and are talking with him," he said. "We are going for evidence and the case will develop from there. We're still in the early stages of the investigation."

Detective Inspector Peter Devoy, the senior investigator in the case, said the youth was later released after questioning and had not been charged.

Further investigation of the youth's seized computers could lead to international inquiries, he said, "and I anticipate we will be talking to 'Akill' again," Devoy said.

Kleintjes said possible charges against the teen could involve having unauthorized access to computers and possessing computer hacking tools—charges that carry a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison.

Spybot and botnet are jargon for infiltrating a group of computers and infecting them with malicious software that allows them to be used to collect information—mainly credit card and bank account details.

Kleintjes said the New Zealander had written software that evaded normal computer spyware systems, then sold his skills to hackers.

"He is very bright and very skilled in what he's doing," Kleintjes said. "He hires his services out to others." *AP*

Teenage cyber criminals who've made headlines

HERE ARE SOME OTHER teenage hackers who have made headlines since the post-1980s rise in global cyber-crime.

- Raphael Gray: The unemployed Welsh 19-year-old famously hacked Microsoft founder Bill Gates' credit card details and sent him a shipment of male antiimpotence drug Viagra in an online spree that ended with an FBI swoop on the teenagers' home village, in Clynderwen, west Wales in 2001. Sentenced to three years' community rehabilitation for stealing credit card information from thousands of people, Gray was later employed by a computer software company.
- Kevin Mitnick: "Computer terrorist" Mitnick, one of the world's most famous computer hackers, reportedly started out hacking phone systems in his teens, before moving on to computers. He became a cause celebre after the FBI launched a three-year manhunt to stop him from breaking into networks and stealing software at companies including Sun Microsystems and Motorola. After serving an almost five-year stint in US jail in the 1990s, and copping an eight-year ban from surfing the web, Mitnick now travels the world advising companies on how to protect themselves from cyber crime.
- The "Pentagon hackers": In 1998 two California teenagers who mounted one of the most systematic hack attacks ever on US military computers were banned from possessing or using a computer modem, from acting as computer consultants, or having any contact with computers out of sight of "a school teacher, a librarian, an employer." Known as the "Pentagon hackers," the then 16- and 17-year-olds who went by the code names "Makaveli" and "TooShort," were given three years probation for assaults on sensitive military and institutional computers.
- Joseph McElroy: In 2004, the bespectacled British 18-year-old narrowly escaped jail after sparking a nuclear panic by hacking into a top secret US research center. Hoping to use the Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory in Illinois's advanced network to download and store films and music from the Internet, the then 16-year-old triggered a slow-down of the system that caused technicians to press "the panic button." Detectives at Scotland Yard traced the student to his East London home and he received a 200-hour community punishment order. *Reuters*

Musharraf says he'll lift emergency rule Dec.16

ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN—Hours after being sworn in to a second term, President Pervez Musharraf announced on Thursday he would lift his state of emergency on Dec. 16, leaving barely three weeks for election campaigning and setting the stage for further confrontation with his opposition.

Musharraf's promise to lift the emergency came after he ended eight years of military rule on Wednesday and was another step toward meeting some of the most urgent demands both at home and abroad to return the country to democracy.

"I fully intend to lift the emergency on Dec. 16, to end the Provisional Constitutional Order and to hold fair and free elections according to the constitution," he said in an address to the nation on state television and radio on Thursday evening.

"No destabilization or hurdle will be allowed in this democratic process," he added. "Elections, God willing, will be held on Jan. 8 according to the constitution and no one should create any hurdles."

Yet even before his announcement, an umbrella movement of opposition parties, the All Pakistan Democratic Movement, led by former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, said they supported a boycott of the elections. *NYT*

Turkish airliner crashes; all 56 on board killed

ANKARA—A TURKISH AIRLINER CRASHED near the town of Isparta in central Turkey on Friday, killing all 56 people on board, officials said.

"Rescue teams have reached the wreckage. There are no survivors," AtlasJet airline's chief executive, Tuncay Doganer, told a televised news conference. Officials said all on board appeared to have been Turkish.

The 165-seat MD 83 plane, manufactured by McDonnell Douglas, crashed in the early hours of Friday in mountains in the Isparta province of central Turkey. It had been flying from Istanbul with 49 passengers and seven crew.

It was not immediately clear what had caused the crash, which occurred 12 km from Isparta's Suleyman Demirel airport.

Doganer said weather conditions were not abnormal at the time of the crash and that he knew of no technical deficiencies aboard the aircraft. The aircraft's black box should explain what happened, he said.

Turkey is now in the grip of winter with snow and fog common on higher ground across much of the country.

"No matter what measures you take plane accidents happen and we see that 80 to 85 percent are due to human mistakes," said Transport Minister Binali Yildirim.

Rescue workers reached the mountainous crash site after military helicopters spotted the wreckage of the airliner.

Turkish television showed a large section of the plane, with emergency exits open, intact on the side of a forested hill.

Anxious relatives arrived at Istanbul airport seeking news about the passengers.

The aircraft disappeared from radar screens shortly before it was due to land at Isparta, about 150 km north of the Mediterranean resort of Antalya.

The state Anatolian news agency said aviation authorities lost contact with the plane just after the pilot said he was preparing to land at Isparta. *Reuters*

Shanghai tycoon draws 16 years for bribery

SHANGHAI, CHINA—A Shanghai real estate tycoon, who was once one of China's richest men, was sentenced Friday to 16 years in prison following a trial for bribery, tax receipt forgery and embezzlement, state media reported.

ZHOU ZHENGYI AP

Zhou Zhengyi was arrested in October 2006 amid a probe of government misconduct that brought down the Shanghai Communist Party secretary and other city leaders. Zhou, 45, earlier served a three-year prison term for fraud and stock manipulation.

The official Xinhua News Agency reported Zhou's 16-year sentence after a closed hearing Friday, citing unnamed sources at the Shanghai No. 2 Intermediate People's Court. It gave no further details.

The financial magazine Caijing said Zhou also was fined 3.35 million yuan ($453,000).

Zhou's trial was held a little over a month ago.

Calls to the Shanghai No. 2 Intermediate Court were not answered. Zhou's lawyer, Ma Shuning, had switched off his mobile phone and could not immediately be reached for comment.

Earlier, Ma had refused to speculate on the likely outcome of the trial.

"What can we expect? Let's see what the court will say," Ma said in a phone interview.

It was unclear if Zhou would appeal. *AP*

Energy-hungry India seeks to be 'wind superpower'

NEW DELHI—INDIA MIGHT be painted as a pollution-spewing, global-warming economy of one billion people but it is also one of the world's biggest wind-power users, part of a focus on renewable energy mostly unnoticed in the West.

Years of tax incentives have helped make India one of the fastest-growing markets for wind power, a major component of renewable energy that will be high on the agenda of the Dec. 3-14 UN climate change meeting in Bali, Indonesia.

The Bali conference comes as international pressure mounts on India to ensure its growth gets cleaner. The International Energy Agency (IEA) warned this month of the climatic dangers of "unfettered" energy demand growth in India.

"When it comes to renewable energy and wind power, India can look the West in the eye and say—look at our years of progressive policies," said Santosh Kamath, a wind-power specialist and associate director at KPMG consultants.

Wind power in India is still a minority sector compared with the Asian giant's overall energy needs that are dependent on coal and oil.

With its reliance on dirty fuels, India will become the world's No. 3 carbon emitter by 2015, the IEA says.

But renewable energy, of which the vast majority is wind power, accounts for more than seven percent of India's installed generation capacity—a rate that compares favorably with much of the rest of the world.

India is the world's fourth largest wind-power market.

"Wind power is growing tremendously. If you want a wind plant, you'll have to book a year in advance," said Chandra Bhushan, associate director at the New Delhi-based Center for Science and Environment.

"There's been years of progressive policies and recognition for a long time that India will face a shortage of fossil fuels."

India, with its thousands of miles of coastline, is suited to wind power. Its wind-power potential is estimated at 45,000 megawatts—about a third of total energy consumption.

There is also little of the concern in India seen in the West over wind turbines ruining scenic vistas—scores can be seen, for example, outside Jaisalmer's ancient fort in Rajasthan, one of India's most popular tourist sites.

The boom brings in profits, the kind of virtuous circle experts say is needed for renewable energy to really work.

At Vestas RBB India Ltd, one of India's largest wind-power firms, sales rose 30 percent in 2006 and the company forecasts growth of about 40 percent this year, company officials say.

India's rise to what supporters call a "wind superpower" is due to tax breaks in the 1990s and to Tulsi Tanti, chair of Suzlon Energy, India's biggest wind-energy company.

Troubled by power shortages in the 1990s for his textile business in western India, he bought some wind turbines and soon realized it could be a good business. His company quickly became the pioneer in the sector.

Wind power has also been helped by some states setting targets that 10 percent of their power should come from renewable energy. *Reuters*

Mrs. Blair: Many societies kick widows out of family homes

UNITED NATIONS—WOMEN IN some northern areas of Nepal and India are expected to shave their heads, sleep on the floor and hide from men after their husbands die.

In many societies across Africa and Asia, these widows and their children are "kicked out of their family home and forced to live in abject poverty," Cherie Blair, the wife of former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, said Thursday.

Blair was in New York to promote the launch of a report from the Loomba Trust, which educates the children of widows in India who are often disempowered because of cultural traditions.

The report estimates over 100 million widows and 400 million children are being failed by the global community.

The charity, of which Blair is president, is hoping to use the report to highlight the plight of widows and generate UN support for the adoption of a resolution designating June 23 as International Widows Day.

"They are one of the groups across the world who are the most ignored, the most denied of their human rights," Blair said. "They suffer appalling treatment, discrimination and isolation."

"As a result of that widows and their children find themselves kicked out of their family home, forced to live in abject poverty, pushed to the margins of society," Blair said. "Therefore (they are) vulnerable to abuse, violence and sexual exploitation."

There are currently 33 million widows struggling to bring up children in India, and 100 million worldwide because of conflicts, HIV/AIDS and ethnic cleansing, Blair said.

"In northern areas of Nepal and in India, they may still be expected to shave their heads, sleep on the floor, wear white, so that they can be distinguished easily and hide from men for the rest of their lives," Blair said. "In Afghanistan and elsewhere, they can be prevented from joining the workforce so they can't support their families. And across Africa and Asia widows are denied or cheated out of their husbands assets and property."

Blair, a prominent human rights lawyer, said the problem is largely invisible.

There is no mention of it in the UN Millennium Development Goals which were agreed by world leaders at a summit in September 2000 to help eradicate poverty, she said.

"(We) educate children of poor widows of India and support their widowed mothers to live a life of dignity," said Raj Loomba, a cofounder of the Loomba Trust.

The trust, now in it's 10th year, educates 3,600 children in India and 500 children who lost their father or both parents in the tsunami in Tamil Nadu. The charity was set up in honor of Loomba's mother, who was widowed at the age of 37 and raised her seven children by herself. *AP*

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Bin Laden urges EU to quit Afghanistan

DUBAI—AL-QAIDA LEADER OSAMA BIN LADEN URGED European countries to end their military cooperation with US forces in Afghanistan, in an audio tape aired by Al Jazeera television on Thursday.

He said American power was waning and it would be wise for the Europeans to quickly end their role in Afghanistan, where many European countries contribute to the 50,000-strong Nato and US-led coalition forces fighting his Taliban allies.

"With the grace of God ... the American tide is receding and they would eventually return to their home across the Atlantic ... It is in your interest to force the hand of your politicians (away from) the White House," said a speaker in the recording who sounded like Bin Laden.

He said the United States would soon leave the region, leaving Afghanistan's neighbors "to settle their scores."

In Washington, a US counterterrorism official said the voice on the audio tape appeared to be Bin Laden's. It was not immediately clear when the new message was recorded.

The United States led the invasion of Afghanistan to depose its Taliban rulers in late 2001, after they refused to hand over Bin Laden and other al-Qaida leaders following the Sept. 11 attacks on the United States.

Bin Laden did not make any threat in the portions of the recording aired by Jazeera.

In the portions aired by Jazeera, Bin Laden said the Taliban had no knowledge of plans for the 2001 attacks.

"I am the one responsible... The Afghan people and government knew nothing whatsoever about these events," he said, adding that the United States had not provided any evidence of Taliban involvement to justify its invasion.

"Europe marched behind it with no choice but to be a lackey," Bin Laden said.

"I'm addressing you (Europeans) and not your politicians ... (who) like to be in the shadow of the White House as many third world leaders," he said, naming current and former leaders of Britain, France, Spain and Italy, including French President Nicolas Sarkozy and British Prime Minister Gordon Brown.

Among European countries with troops in Afghanistan are Britain, Germany and France. The West says coalition forces aim to help bring security to allow reconstruction after decades of conflict. *Reuters*

STILL photograph of Bin Laden grabbed from Al Jazeera television on Nov. 29. AFP

INGRID Betancourt, French-Colombian politician kidnapped since February 2002, is seen in a video released by the Colombian government in Bogota Nov. 30. REUTERS

Colombia has proof hostages may be alive

BOGOTA, COLOMBIA—COLOMBIA'S TOP peace negotiator announced early Friday morning the government had seized videotapes of rebel-held hostages, including three US defense contractors and former presidential candidate Ingrid Betancourt.

High Commissioner for Peace Luis Carlos Restrepo said the tapes were confiscated after the arrest Thursday evening of three suspected urban members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, better known as the FARC.

The tapes are the first images in years providing evidence the hostages may be alive.

The videotapes, which were played at a news conference without sound, showed an extremely gaunt Betancourt, apparently chained, in front a jungle backdrop. In the silent images, Betancourt, who was kidnapped in 2002, has long hair and stares blankly at the ground.

The government said the tapes carried the date for Betancourt of Oct. 24, 2007. The tape of the Americans carried the date of Jan. 1, 2007, but a kidnapped Colombian soldier, who appeared on the same tape, said the recording was being made on Oct. 23.

The Americans, Thomas Howes, Keith Stansell and Marc Gonsalves, were abducted by the FARC after their plane went down in southern Colombia in 2003.

Restrepo said the five tapes showed images of 12 other Colombians, mainly members of the security forces.

The FARC are offering to release these and other hostages in exchange for the freeing of hundreds of rebels from Colombian and US prisons.

Venezuelan leader Hugo Chavez had been involved in trying to mediate a deal between the government and the rebels until last week when President Alvaro Uribe ended his role, saying Chavez had disobeyed a direct order in contacting the head of Colombia's army.

During his time as mediator, Chavez had demanded from the FARC so-called "proof of life" of the hostages, evidence that they were indeed still alive.

Restrepo said the army also found various letters, including an undated letter from Howes to his wife, as well as a will dated Nov. 26, 2006. A letter from Gonsalves to the military commander of the FARC, known as "Mono Jojoy," dated Oct. 23, 2007, and a letter from Betancourt to her mother dated Oct. 24, 2007. *AP*

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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WHAT'S INSIDE

■ Pacman-Marquez II set Mar. 15 /A24

■ Celtics unforgiving /A25

Trillanes caper in SEAG news

By Musong R. Castillo

NAKHON RATCHASIMA, THAILAND—THE LATest caper pulled off by Sen. Antonio Trillanes made the SEA Games news here.

Thailand has two television networks covering these Games, and one of them showed footage of the Philippine military using an armored personnel carrier to ram the lobby of the Manila Peninsula, where Trillanes and Co. were holed up.

Panelists talked at length about the siege in their native tongue. It was not clear how they managed to link the Filipinos' chances in the SEAG with the Trillanes coup.

* * *

Athletes who trained in warm weather would be shocked when they get to this lovely province.

Temperatures here have dropped over the past few days—much like the weather in Baguio at this time—and coaches are worried of the effect this could have on their athletes.

"We advise our athletes to bring heavy sweaters for the cold here," said PSC commissioner Richie Garcia.

Even the Thai football coach expressed concern over his team's chances of bagging the gold that matters most to this country.

"I'm not worried about injuries (to my players), I'm worried about the cold," said the coach as the temperature dipped to 14 degrees Celsius.

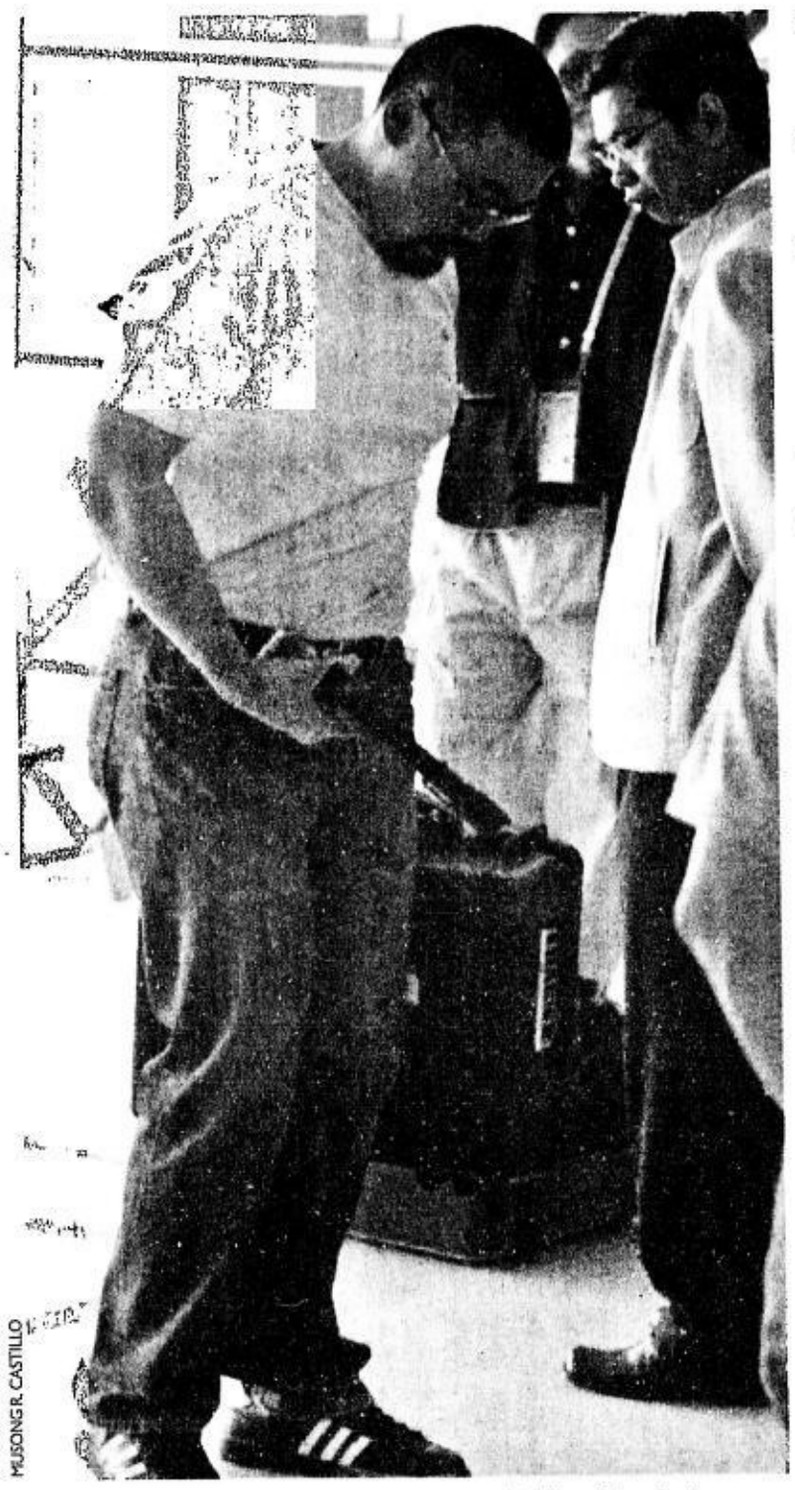
* * *

It was a call worth waking up to.

Athletics chief Go Teng Kok is on the warpath again, this time against PSC commissioner Richie Garcia *(See story on A24)*.

Go made a series of calls to reporters here as early as 5:30 a.m., local time, to hit out at the commissioner, making sure that this reporter took note of everything.

"I believe that you are (a) fair (reporter) working for a fair newspaper," he said.



MUSONG R. CASTILLO

A DEJECTED "Tac" Padilla leaves the range with his malfunctioning gun.

Padilla comes to grief as gun malfunctions

By Musong R. Castillo

BANGKOK—THE POTENTIAL FIRST Philippine gold medal in the 24th Southeast Asian Games here got stuck in the barrel of Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla's expensive gun Friday as the breaks continued to elude Filipino shooters after four days of the biennial meet.

Padilla's P120,000 Pardini .22-caliber pistol malfunctioned twice in the second qualifying stage of his pet 25-meter rapid fire event, dooming the Philippines' chances of a breakthrough gold and reducing the muscular shooter to tears *(See story on A24)*.

"This hurts because I prepared so hard for this event," said Padilla, wiping off tears inside the locker room. "I had problems with this gun before leaving (for Thailand), but we already fixed it with the parts coming directly from Italy."

The 43-year-old, multi-titled shooter not only rued blowing the chance to shoot down a medal but the opportunity to make the record books as well.

"I even had a chance to break the SEA Games record," added Padilla, who first won this event as a 15-year-old in Jakarta 28 years ago. "The (potential) 30 points I lost clearly told the story."

Padilla settled for 538 points, 26 shy of the record 564.

That mark was eventually shattered by two Malaysians, Hafiz Adzha and Hasli Izwan Amir Hasan, who fired 572 and 571 points, respectively, to tow six others into the medal round later in the day.

The other Filipino in the event, Robert Donalvo, was never really in it and finished with 518 points.

Thai Opas Ruengpanyawut rallied to win the gold medal, shooting 196.8 points to nip Hasan (189.2), 760.8 to 760.2. Their total output came from the second stage of classification and 20 shots in the finals.

Adzha tallied 187 for the bronze at 759.

The 50m prone rifle team of Eddie Tomas, Edwin Fernandez and Rocky Pardilla finished sixth in a seven-team field, shooting 1,726 points in the only other event the Philippines was entered for the day.

Padilla's gun first jammed after just two shots of the second 8-second session. And

PADILLA/ A24

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Pacman-Marquez II set Mar. 15

PACQUIAO: Bigger prize money

By Salven L. Lagumbay, *Contributor*

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Forty-eight participants have scored a perfect three wins each, among them Patrick Antonio with two entries, Francis Maranan, Beng Joson-RCF, Caridad Eagle, Bobby Doromal, Ruel Ricafort, Rep. Arthur Celeste, Nestor Vendivil, Levi Panganiban, Ontong Fortuno, Alex Tang, Jun Sevilla and Wilvin Sy, according to United Gamecock Breeders Association president Rene Diaz.

No Beijing Olympics for Briones, Alora

By Marc Anthony Reyes

HO CHI MINH CITY—ALEXANDER Briones and Kirstie Elaine Alora dropped their opening matches in heartbreaking fashions Friday, leaving the Philippines with only two taekwondo qualifiers in the Beijing Olympics next year.

Briones fought the highly favored Iranian Hadi Saei Bonehkohal on even terms in the male -80kg category, but he stepped into the restricted red boundary twice and was deducted a point in the final 24 seconds of the match, which was all his rival needed to win, 1-0.

Earlier, Alora was robbed of at least two clear points before going down to Vietnamese Hoai Thu Nguyen Thi, 2-1, in the first round of the female -57kg category at the Phu Tho indoor stadium.

The twin defeats in the Asian taekwondo qualifying here came a day after Mary Antoinette Rivero secured her second straight Olympic berth by finishing second in the female -67 category.

Rivero later abandoned her final match against Kazakhstan's Nurkina Liya to rest her battered legs and conserve her strength for next week's Southeast Asian Games in Thailand where she is the defending lightweight champion.

Tshomlee Go nailed the first Olympic slot recently during the World qualifying in Manchester, England. Go and Rivero also vied in the 2004 Athens Olympics.

"Alex was pushed out, because the Iranian was too cautious to attack," said men's coach Kitoy Cruz of the crucial infraction committed by his 23-year-old ward.

Bonehkohal, 31, obviously regarded the Filipino highly as he failed to launch the furious assaults that had already rewarded him with gold medals in the World Championships, Olympics, Asian Games and Asian Championships.

Alora, who turned 18 last Sunday and the conqueror of Thi during the 2005 SEAG in Manila, absorbed two hits but scored twice as well in a furious action at the start of the first round.

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UGBA 9-stag semis starts

THE SEMIFINAL ROUND OF THE UGBA Heritage Cup National 9-Stag Derby begins today at San Juan Coliseum, with over 100 matches sponsored by Sagupaan Complexor 3000.

Forty-eight participants have scored a perfect three wins each, among them Patrick Antonio with two entries, Francis Maranan, Beng Joson-RCF, Caridad Eagle, Bobby Doromal, Ruel Ricafort, Rep. Arthur Celeste, Nestor Vendivil, Levi Panganiban, Ontong Fortuno, Alex Tang, Jun Sevilla and Wilvin Sy, according to United Gamecock Breeders Association president Rene Diaz.

No Beijing Olympics for Briones, Alora

By Marc Anthony Reyes

HO CHI MINH CITY—ALEXANDER Briones and Kirstie Elaine Alora dropped their opening matches in heartbreaking fashions Friday, leaving the Philippines with only two taekwondo qualifiers in the Beijing Olympics next year.

Briones fought the highly favored Iranian Hadi Saei Bonehkohal on even terms in the male -80kg category, but he stepped into the restricted red boundary twice and was deducted a point in the final 24 seconds of the match, which was all his rival needed to win, 1-0.

Earlier, Alora was robbed of at least two clear points before going down to Vietnamese Hoai Thu Nguyen Thi, 2-1, in the first round of the female -57kg category at the Phu Tho indoor stadium.

The twin defeats in the Asian taekwondo qualifying here came a day after Mary Antoinette Rivero secured her second straight Olympic berth by finishing second in the female -67 category.

Rivero later abandoned her final match against Kazakhstan's Nurkina Liya to rest her battered legs and conserve her strength for next week's Southeast Asian Games in Thailand where she is the defending lightweight champion.

Tshomlee Go nailed the first Olympic slot recently during the World qualifying in Manchester, England. Go and Rivero also vied in the 2004 Athens Olympics.

"Alex was pushed out, because the Iranian was too cautious to attack," said men's coach Kitoy Cruz of the crucial infraction committed by his 23-year-old ward.

Bonehkohal, 31, obviously regarded the Filipino highly as he failed to launch the furious assaults that had already rewarded him with gold medals in the World Championships, Olympics, Asian Games and Asian Championships.

Alora, who turned 18 last Sunday and the conqueror of Thi during the 2005 SEAG in Manila, absorbed two hits but scored twice as well in a furious action at the start of the first round.

Celtics unforgiving

Boston routs New York, 104-59

BOSTON—THE BOSTON CELTICS, LED BY 21 POINTS EACH FROM RAY ALLEN and Paul Pierce, soared to a bruising 104-59 humiliation of the beleaguered New York Knicks on Thursday.

Only a three-point heave by Nate Robinson from 54 feet out at the buzzer saved the Knicks from their lowest scoring total in franchise history.

The Celtics, the top team in the NBA, led by 25 points in the second quarter and enjoyed a 54-31 advantage at halftime.

The margin went to 45 in the third quarter and reached a game-high 52 points with seven minutes left in the game.

Knicks coach Isiah Thomas described his team's first-half performance was the most selfish he had ever seen by a team.

"I thought every single player was thinking about himself, as opposed to thinking about the team," Thomas told reporters.

"I ain't never seen nothing like it," Knicks player Zach Randolph told reporters. "Never. Never. Never in my career."

Randolph and Eddy Curry took 15 shots in the first half and made only two. They finished the game with four points each, Randolph going 1-for-10 and Curry sinking just 2-of-11 field-goal attempts.

Stephon Marbury was equally ineffective, scoring four points on 2-of-6 shooting.

Only Robinson, with 11 points, finished in double figures for the Knicks.

The loss was their worst in 27 years. They made a mere 30.3 percent of their shots from the field.

"That was embarrassing. No way around it. No excuses. That was embarrassing. Unfortunately sometimes things like this happen," Knicks guard Jamal Crawford said. "But you have to bounce back. We haven't quit on the team. It was just a bad game.

"I don't know where this came from, I definitely did not see this game coming," Thomas added. "This was not a good night."

The Celtics began the third quarter with an 11-0 run and it was then only a matter of how long and by how much they would win.

"It's tough, it's real tough to go through that," Randolph said. "It's a long season but to play like that, I don't know what to say."

"We played horrible. That's the bottom line," Knicks forward Quentin Richardson said. "Taking nothing away from them but at the same time we played horrible."

Boston, which improved to a league-best 12-2, led by as much as 92-43 in the fourth quarter, the club's biggest lead at any point in any game in seven years. The Knicks fell to 4-10 overall and 0-7 on the road.

Kevin Garnett played just 22 minutes and scored eight points.

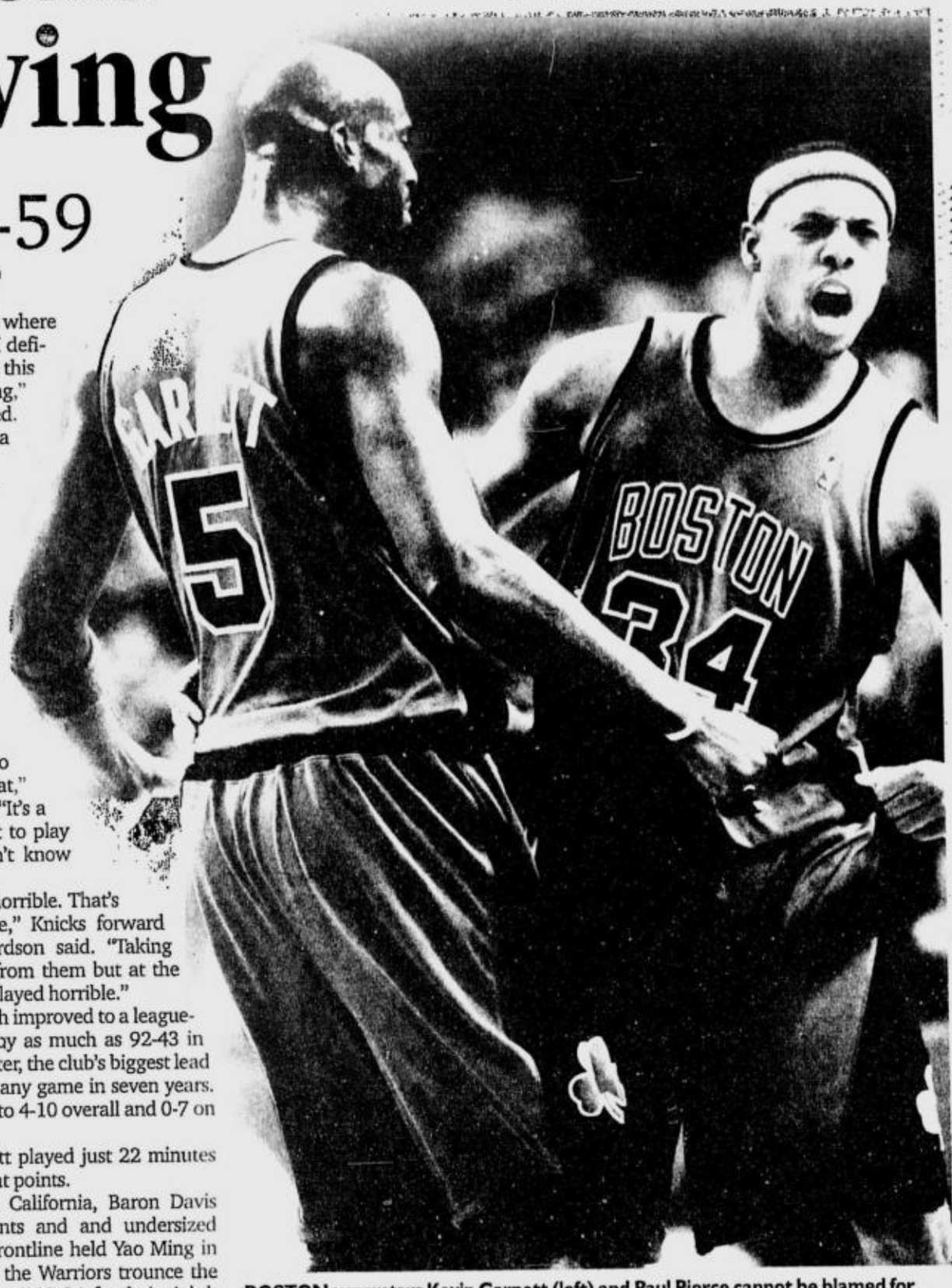
In Oakland, California, Baron Davis scored 27 points and and undersized Golden State frontline held Yao Ming in check, helping the Warriors trounce the Houston Rockets, 113-94, for their eighth win in nine games after an 0-6 start.

Stephen Jackson added 19 points and Al Harrington had 18 for the Warriors (8-7), who became the fastest team in NBA history to post a winning record after losing its first six games.

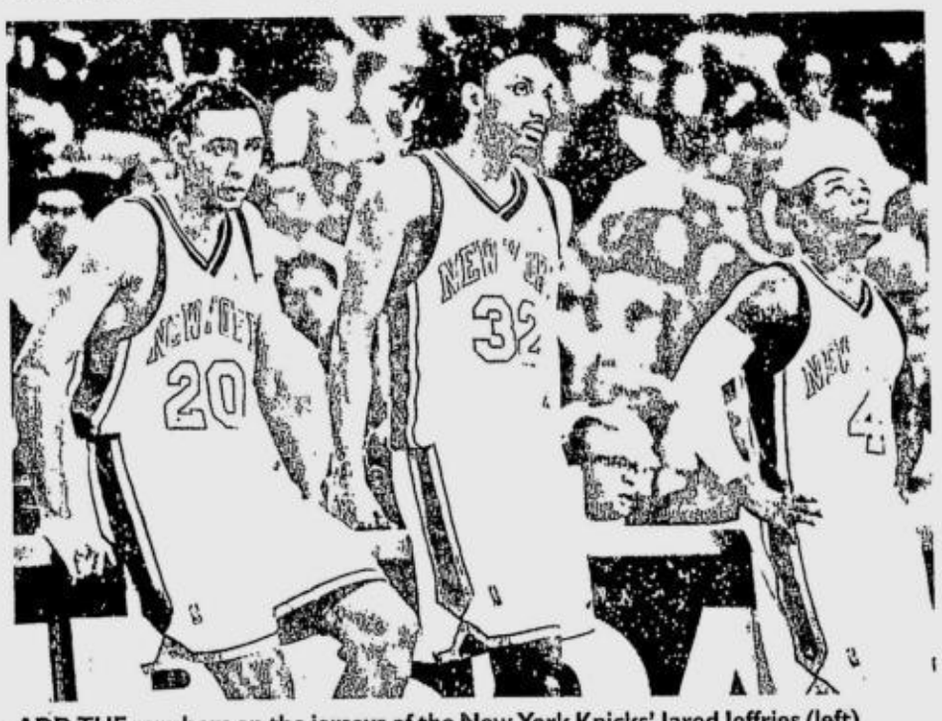
Even though the 7-foot-6 Yao had a decided advantage over Harrington (6-9) and Andris Biedrins (6-11), he was unable to convert that into success on the court. He shot 4-for-12 and had five turnovers, finishing with 10 points.

In Los Angeles, Kobe Bryant scored 24 points and reserve guard Sasha Vujacic dominated the fourth quarter, scoring 19 of his 22 points there and helping the Lakers to a 127-99 rout of Denver.

Reuters, AP, AFP



BOSTON superstars Kevin Garnett (left) and Paul Pierce cannot be blamed for celebrating early: The Celtics took the New York Knicks out of contention even before halftime on the way to a crushing victory. AP



ADD THE numbers on the jerseys of the New York Knicks' Jared Jeffries (left), Renaldo Balkman (middle) and Nate Robinson. That's how many points the Knicks were doomed to score before a 37-foot triple by Robinson saved them from a franchise-low total. AP

Russia pulls off Davis Cup final surprise

PORTLAND, OREGON—RUSSIA pulled a surprise at Thursday's draw for the Davis Cup final, leaving fourth-ranked Nikolay Davydenko out of the singles matches.

Davydenko—at the center of a gambling investigation—was relegated to playing doubles with Igor Andreev, and captain Shamil Tarpischev picked Dmitry Tursunov and Mikhail Youzhny for singles.

Many expected Davydenko, as the highest-ranked player on the Russian team, to play singles in the competition, which runs Friday through Sunday at Portland's Memorial Coliseum.

Instead, Tursunov will face sixth-ranked Andy Roddick in the opening match Friday, followed by 13th-ranked James Blake against Youzhny.

Davydenko and Andreev are slated to play the top-ranked duo of Bob and Mike Bryan on Saturday. The singles' opponents are reversed on Sunday.

"We have four strong players, be it for singles or doubles, so the choice was made for tactical reasons," said Tarpischev, who is known for his craftiness. Even his players were taken aback.

"I learned only a couple of minutes ago at the draw ceremony," Tursunov said. "It was our captain's Christmas gift to me."

Davydenko accepted his role.

"Well, it was our captain's decision that the strongest are at this point Tursunov and Youzhny," he said.

At No. 34, Tursunov is only the fourth-highest Russian in the singles rankings, following Davydenko, No. 19 Youzhny and No. 33 Andreev.

US team captain Patrick McEnroe said he wasn't surprised about the twist, but he didn't expect the Bryans to face the Russian duo put forward Thursday. He predicted last-minute maneuvering on the part of the Russians, perhaps even for the reverse singles Sunday.

RODDICK

DAVYDENKO

"I don't think they probably even know who their doubles team will be. That will probably depend somewhat on what happens on Friday," he said.

The once-dominant United States has 31 Davis Cup titles but none in 12 years, the longest span without an American victory. Pete Sampras last led the team to victory over Russia on clay in Moscow in 1995.

Russia is the defending champion, having defeated Argentina last year in Moscow.

Last year Tursunov held on in Moscow to beat Roddick, 6-3, 6-4, 5-7, 3-6, 17-15, and give Russia a spot in the final with a 3-2 win over the US.

Asked if the marathon match was added motivation, Roddick said the bigger picture was his team's victory in the Davis Cup.

"I don't need any added hunger," he said, "no question of that."

As for the us-against-them flavor to the competition, most of the players can't recall much about the Cold War.

"The only bad Russian I remember growing up was Drago in Rocky," Roddick said.

McEnroe was more serious in his response.

"This match is bigger than the US against Russia," he said. "It's about a quest this team has been on for a while."

Davydenko is under investigation after authorities noticed unusual betting patterns during his loss to Martin Vassallo Arguello of Argentina in August.

Betfair, an online gambling company, voided all bets on the match after unusually large amounts were wagered on the lowly ranked Argentine throughout the contest in Poland. *AP*

Jackson says yes to Lakers again

LOS ANGELES—PHIL JACKSON ULTIMATELY decided that his hips and his patience could hold up for two more seasons.

Jackson extended his Hall of Fame coaching career to at least until the summer of 2010 when he accepted a two-year contract extension with the Lakers, a deal believed to be worth $12 million per year.

The extension offer from owner Jerry Buss had been on the table for months, but Jackson, 62, slow-played his decision and said his health, and the Lakers' ability to be competitive, would influence his choice.

Finally, in a meeting with Buss on Wednesday, Jackson agreed to stay around.

Jackson's three-year contract expires next summer. It pays him $10 million per year, the most for any coach in pro sports.

"I asked them to be patient until I worked my way through a couple of road trips," Jackson said before Thursday's game against Denver, "until I saw if I was in a position where I could comfortably coach this team. I think that occurred a month or so into the season."

Jackson will oversee a crucial time in team history. Kobe Bryant will either stay or go, Andrew Bynum will either be a star or a flop and the Lakers will return to success or fade deeper into mediocrity.

It has been difficult to get a read on Jackson's intentions. He offered a litany of factors he had to consider, most importantly his recovery from the two hip-replacement surgeries he has had in the past 13 months.

NYT News Service

RP's own tennis hero sets Mandaluyong clinic

CECIL MAMIIT, THE HERO IN THE country's march back into Group I of the Davis Cup tournament, will be conducting a free tennis clinic for the youth of Mandaluyong on Sunday morning at the Mandaluyong Lawn Tennis Club court along Maysilo Circle.

Mamiit, who bucked a stomach ailment to help the country beat Kuwait and advance to Group I, is expected to teach Mandaluyong kids the secrets to his tennis success.

Mamiit will be conducting the clinic with help from Mandaluyong Mayor Benhur Abalos and Cebuana Lhuillier, whose president Jean Henri Lhuillier, is Mamiit's sponsor for his international training and also the team manager of the SEA Games-bound men's tennis team.

"This will certainly benefit our youth and will go along way in encouraging young people to go into sports," said Abalos.

On his part, Lhuillier welcomed the opportunity to work hand in hand with a local government unit in promoting sports among the youth.

"After this, we plan to do another tennis clinic in another venue after the SEA Games," he said even as Mamiit himself said he was excited at the prospect of teaching young people the basics of tennis.

"I am looking forward to this event and I am sure I will enjoy the experience of sharing my tennis knowledge with the youth," said Mamiit.

The Mandaluyong Lawn tennis Club, headed by Amar Santdas is organizing the event at the local level and will be bringing in the clinic participants coming from schools in Mandaluyong.

Execs hit road one last time

THE SPYDER XRC'07 EXECUTIVE ROAD Cycling Race Series will hold its final leg at the Subic Bay Freeport on Dec. 2.

The much-awaited race will once again bring together the country's top executive road cyclists. Racing for individual and team honors are the following teams: Microsoft, PLDT, Fitness First, Polo Tri, Logicgate, Nescafe and Enervon.

The participating racers are all working executives from some of the country's top corporations who have a common drive to excel and win.

Competition is expected to heat up further as accumulated points from all the previous four races will be tallied after this final race to determine the series overall winners.

According to Jojo S. Limpo, Spyder's Creative Director for Asia, "Spyder is solidly committed to promote cycling, and will continue to play a major role in bringing professionally-run races to the community and other viable venues where athletes and enthusiasts will be given the opportunity to compete, and go beyond limits."

CYCLISTS get going at the start of the previous Spyder leg.

SPORTS

Thailand lifts Putra Cup as RP surge falls short

Final team scores:
860—Thailand 212-215-216-217; **862—Philippines 222-218-216-206**; 868—Singapore 217-216-223-212; 879—Indonesia 221-221-220-217; 891—Malaysia 222-218-229-222; 905—Hong Kong 217-231-233-224

By Roy Luarca

STA. ROSA, LAGUNA—HOST PHILIPPINES DEfied all odds to give Thailand a big scare, but couldn't go all the way.

The Filipinos moved into a tie from 13 strokes down after nine holes before losing their touch in the back nine, as the Thais put away the Putra Cup with a two-shot win yesterday at The Country Club here.

Flawless with a 31 going out, Mark Fernando bogeyed two of the last three holes and settled for a two-under-par 68, while Jay Bayron capped a 69 with a bogey as the Philippines closed out with a tournament-best 206 for an 862 total.

Ferdie Aunzo matched Bayron's 69 to complete the Filipinos' scoring. Jhonnel Ababa failed to count with a 72.

The Thais, virtually untouchable in the first three rounds, struggled to a seven-over 217 but still grabbed their 12th Putra Cup title since 1985 with an 860 aggregate.

Thanyakorn Krongpha, who hardly contributed for Thailand in the first three rounds, emerged the team's top scorer with a 72, the same output of Varut Chomchalam, as Kiradech Aphibarnrat settled for a 73. Varan Israbhakdi's 75 did not count.

The hosts, given up for lost despite surging to joint second Thursday, sprang to life with a sizzling front side. Fernando fired four birdies for a 31, Aunzo had a 33 and Bayron and Ababa each matched par 35.

That six-under output, coupled with the Thais seven-over card pushed the Filipinos alongside the leaders at the turn, reviving RP hopes of ending a 10-year title drought in the event also known Southeast Asian Amateur Golf Team Championship.

But the nerves of the vaunted Thai squad held at the backside with a string of saved pars.

Despite losing its team title, Singapore succeeded in foiling Thailand's sweep bid as top player Quincy Quek birdied the last three holes on the way to a tournament-best 66 to nip Aphibarnrat in the countback for the individual crown.

Quek and Aphibarnrat wound up with 284s while Fernando took third with a 287, edging Bayron in the countback.

THE THAI squad of (main picture, from left) Varan Israbhakdi, Thanyakorn Krongpha, Coach Methee Sudasna, Varut Chomchalam, Kiradech Aphibarnrat celebrate. Above, Mark Fernando shows his trophy.

Alcantara downs Croat, gains semis

By Romina S. Austria

FOR FRANCIS CASEY ALCANTARA, REACHing the semifinals of the Phinma International Junior Circuit Week 1 isn't enough. He wants the title, no less.

"I really want to be the champion this time," said the second-seeded Alcantara after hacking out a 6-2, 6-2 victory over eighth pick Vedran Ljubicic of Croatia, 6-2, 6-2, yesterday and claiming a semifinals seat in the boys' singles at the Rizal Memorial tennis court.

The 15-year-old Alcantara, who earlier blanked compatriot Akio Sy, 6-0, 6-0, in the second round of the rain-delayed tournament, overpowered the Croat with mean ground strokes and sporadic net attacks to keep the Philippine flag afloat.

Alcantara, the only Filipino survivor in the week-long event, will battle Australian Sean White in today's semifinals 4 matches.

White barged into the semifinals with a 7-5, 6-1 victory over Filipino Joshua Hansel Ho and a 7-5, 7-6 (3) squeaker over Singaporean Sylvester Wee.

Alcantara's wins came after Russian Artem Ilyushim thwarted Filipino Pablo Olivarez II, 6-3, 7-5. The Russian made the semis by downing Australian James Duckworth, 6-4, 6-3.

Top seed Huang Liang chi of Taiwan also advanced after Japanese Masato Shiga retired while trailing 3-6, 0-1.

Huang tripped Thailand's Adirek Khundanpinitwon, 6-3, 6-4, earlier while Shiga routed Australian Benjamin Wagland, 6-1, 6-0.

Pinoy chessers out to eclipse Chinese

By Roy Luarca

REPEATEDLY HUMBLED BY CHInese players on home soil, Filipino chess bets seek vindication starting today when the third Prospero Pichay Cup international chess championship begins at 3 p.m. at Duty Free Fiesta Mall in Parañaque City.

The Chinese, led by Grandmaster Ni Hua, finished 1-2-3 in last week's President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo Cup, marking the fourth straight time that they have dominated tournaments in the country.

The Filipinos, with Turin Olympians GMs Joey Antonio, Eugene Torre, Mark Paagua and Darwin Laylo and GM-candidate Wesley So at the forefront, are out to break the Chinese stranglehold in the $30,000 (about P12.9 million) tournament that dangles a champion's purse of $5,000.

Laylo will make his first local appearance since annexing the GM title in the Asian Individual Chess Championship held in Mandaue City in September.

He competed in the World Chess Cup in Khanti-Mansiysk, Russia, where he was ousted by French GM Etienne Bacrot, 0.5-1.5, in the first round.

Also in the fold after his stint in the World Cup is Iranian GM Ehsan Ghaem Maghami.

Ni, again the top seed in the Pichay Cup, landed second with Zhou Weiqi Zhou copping third.

The absence of GM Zhang Pengxian, winner of the first GMA Cup and the Asian Individual Chess Championship, and Philippine International Open champion GM Wang Yue make the task of crashing the tournament's top three a bit easier for the Filipinos.

Servida-Rosales tops Founders Cup; Superal-Abdon up

CHITO SERVIDA AND PARTner Gen. Boysie Rosales weathered swirling final-round winds and snatched the overall net plum at the Orchard's Founders Cup in Dasmariñas, Cavite, recently.

Servida and Rosales tallied 84 points in aggregate play at the Palmer course in calmer conditions and with a best-ball score of 49 at the Player side totalled 133—the best among the 368 teams which took part in the 11th edition of the member-guest tournament.

Jungolfers Wolen Juan Superal and John Kier Abdon shared the limelight by winning the low gross title over first-day leaders King Stehmeier and Bones Floro.

Stehmeier and Floro ran smack into the blustery winds and wound up with just 37 for 124. The pair lost in the countback for second in Group A.

John Baron Garcia and brother Ramon III took the Group A crown, Antonio Abad and Gil Domingo captured the Group B title, Gerry Sy and Emeterio Dilditanan clinched the Group C award and Joseph Ferrer and Gene Sebastian bagged the Group D plum.

Philip Nolasco and Stephen Chu ruled the special division.

The Garcias pooled 126 for a two-point win over Munding del Rosario-Alfredo Pareja; Abad-Domingo beat Louie Bustamante-Beth Menchavez by three with 131; Sy-Dilditanan won by three over Christine Popp-Lolit Arguelles and Ferrer-Sebastian (130) nipped Romeo Asis-Oscar Desipeda by one.

Winners received their trophies and prizes from Orchard chair Vicente Santos and president Conrad Benitez.

Orchard general manager Rene Garrovillo also expressed his appreciation to the members of The Orchard and the club's officers and staff for the success of the tournament, which had Globe Telecom, Security Bank-Mastercard, BMW-Ford Alabang, Bostik Phils.-Davies Technical Solutions, Sta. Lucia Realty, Philippine Airlines and Mizuno as major sponsors.

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Teves: Transco bidding will push through

Concession, not assets, up for sale on Dec. 12

IN THIS ISSUE

PSE approves Oriental Peninsula public offering /B2

DA steps up war vs smuggling /B8

By Abigail L. Ho

THE CONTROVERSIES CURRENTLY HOUNDING IT WILL not deter the bidding for the 25-year National Transmission Corp. concession on Dec. 12, according to Finance Secretary Margarito Teves.

In an interview with reporters Thursday evening, he said government decision makers should be made to understand that what would be auctioned on Dec. 12 was not the actual national electricity superhighway. *(See related story on Page B4.)*

"We need to communicate with decision makers that it's just a concession. We'll still retain legal ownership of Transco. A lot of our colleagues in government don't seem to understand this very well," he said.

Teves added that based on the current trend in the government's privatization efforts, Transco should fetch a higher price than its latest valuation of about $3 billion.

TEVES/ B2

DBP offers hedging facility to OFWs

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE STATE-OWNED DEVELOPMENT Bank of the Philippines is offering a facility to help overseas Filipino workers and their households hedge their foreign currency earnings against the sharp peso appreciation.

"We have approved the DBP's hedging facility for OFWs," Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said in a briefing Thursday night.

Tetangco said the policymaking Monetary Board has given DBP the authority to offer various derivatives instruments such as US dollar non-deliverable forwards, US dollar and peso currency options and US dollar outright forwards.

A derivative is a sophisticated financial instrument whose value is derived from the value of an underlying good or index like the exchange rate, interest rate or stock prices.

Forward refers to contracts to purchase or sell a specified amount of foreign currency at a specified exchange rate that is settled at a specified future date. A non-deliverable forward, on the other hand, does not require actual delivery of the currency and only the differential is paid upon maturity. An option is a right to buy or sell a particular commodity at a specified price within a set time.

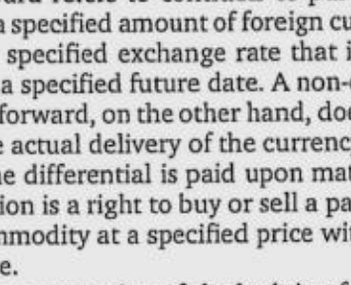
"It's an expansion of the hedging facility we offered exporters, (this time) to help OFWs," said DBP president Reynaldo David.

DBP plans to market the hedging instruments through the manning agencies that deploy Filipino workers abroad.

The state-owned bank's outstanding hedging contracts with exporters now amount to about $200 million, rising from scratch in October when the exchange rate broke into the P42:$1 level.

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



NOVEMBER

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱42.75 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Nov. 29, 2007

¥110.18 = $1

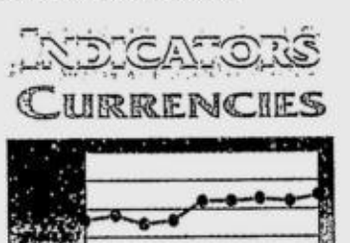
As of 5 p.m., Nov. 30, 2007

GOLD: $794.60/795.10

per ounce Hong Kong, Nov. 30, 2007

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



NOVEMBER

(See stock market report on Page B4)

Markets closed Friday for holiday

PHILIPPINE FINANCIAL MARKETS WERE closed yesterday for a public holiday. Trading will resume Monday, Dec. 3. *AP*

Brittany BEAUTIFUL
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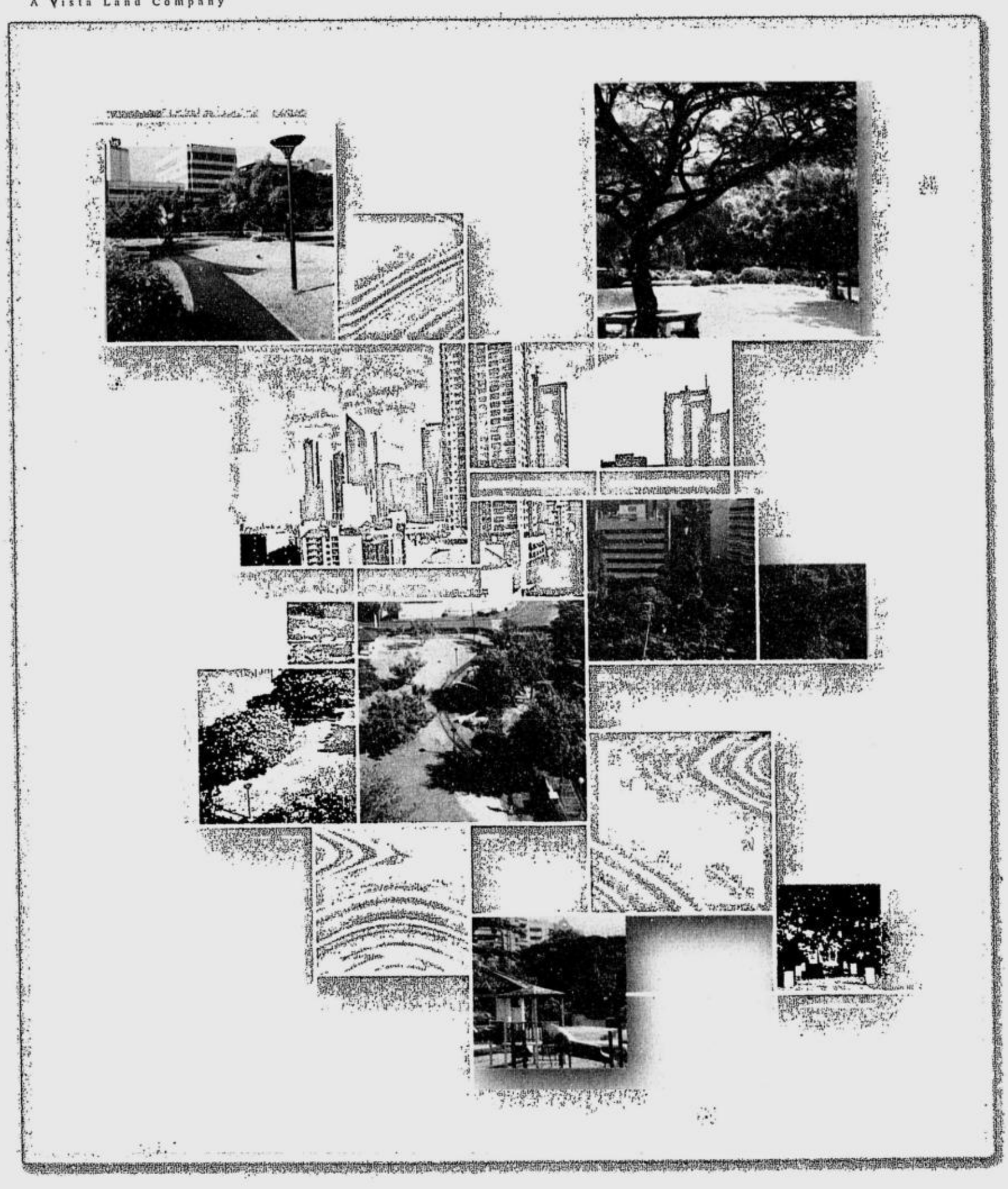

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PSE approves Oriental Peninsula public offering

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

THE PHILIPPINE STOCK EXchange (PSE) has approved the plan by holding firm Oriental Peninsula Resources Group to pursue a public offering of shares by Dec. 18 to raise as much as P894 million in fresh capital for the company.

The company is offering 300 million shares at between P1.98 and P2.98 each.

In a prospectus filed with the PSE, Oriental Peninsula said its offer period would be conducted from Dec. 5 to 11. The listing date is tentatively set on Dec. 18. The final offer price will be set on Dec. 3.

The company's market capital is estimated at P2.87 billion to P4.33 billion after it lists a total of 1.452 billion shares, including the public offer shares.

The company has tapped Asian Alliance Investment Corp. as its underwriter or manager for the offering.

Proceeds from the stock issue will help fund capital expenditures and working expenses.

Oriental Peninsula owns 94 percent of City Nickel Mines and Development Corp., which has two mining rights in Palawan.

Filipino groups Golden Spin Realty Inc. and Citimax Group Inc. own 38.5 percent and 12.9 percent in the company, respectively.

There are 14 listed mining firms on the local bourse. These include Apex Mining Co. Inc., Abra Mining and Industrial Corp., Atlas Consolidated Mining and Development Corp., Benguet Corp., Dizon Copper Silver Mines Inc., Geograce Resources Inc., Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co., Manila Mining Corp., Nihao Mineral Resources International Inc., Omico Corp., Philex Mining Corp., Semirara Mining Corp., United Paragon Mining Corp. and Vulcan Industrial and Mining.

Last year, the mining and oil index was up by 63.3 percent following renewed interest in the sector.

Market capitalization—or the value of stocks based on their current market prices—of listed mining firms grew 58 percent to P42.7 billion in 2006 from its level in 2005. In the first seven months, the market capital of all listed mining firms shot up 74.5 percent to P74.6 billion.

The state-led Mines and Geosciences Bureau said that it has hundreds of mining firms that are candidates for PSE listing.

MGB estimates that a total of $6.33 billion in mining investments can be raised up to 2010 involving 41 exploration projects. These consist of 12 copper and gold projects, 24 gold projects, three nickel-platinum projects, one bauxite and one sulfur project.

Raising funds for Palawan mines

IPVG enters another Internet venture

By Riza T. Olchondra

LISTED FIRM IPVG CORP. IS INVESTING IN another venture with information technology company Sabiclub.com Corp.

IPVG said in a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange that its board of directors has approved a proposal to invest in up to 49-percent equity in a subsidiary to be created by Sabiclub.com.

IPVG said it would allot $385,000 (P16.5 million) for an initial 40-percent interest in the Sabiclub subsidiary, which has yet to be incorporated.

"The new structure, such as the agreement by the parties, is still subject to the approval of the board of directors of the company," IPVG said.

Communications head Sheila Rada said in an interview that the new venture is separate from "i-Hooked," an Internet café chain and network gaming center earlier opened by the same partners.

In August, IPVG and Sabiclub said they would jointly put up more than 100 Internet cafés nationwide in the next two years. Sabiclub president Dong Hun Lee said each outlet would cost between P5 million and 10 million in development and all will be located near schools in Metro Manila.

"Expect i-Hooked to become a major driver in our Internet café plans," said IPVG CEO Enrique Gonzalez said.

"Once we have a flagship branch in Makati with around 100 computers, we aim to build more than 50 units per branch with high-end computers," he said.

To grow i-Hooked's customer base, Lee said "we will upgrade our hardware and service regularly. We also plan to hold regular interbranch PC gaming tournaments."

Internet rates at i-Hooked are flexible, ranging from P25 to P40 per hour to adapt to a particular market's purchasing capability. Initially, the first few branches will charge P36 per hour.

Petrolift gets nod to sell shares

OIL AND GAS TANKER FIRM Petrolift Inc. has secured approval from the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) for its initial public offer that may raise up to P5.5 billion in fresh capital.

In a memorandum offering circular disclosed to the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE), Petrolift said it plans to sell between 457 million and 713 million new and existing shares at P4.90 to P7.65 each.

Of the total offer, Petrolift will offer 326.26-509.56 million primary or new shares, and 130.5-203.8 million secondary or existing shares.

Petrolift aims to raise between P2.2 billion and 5.46 billion from the offering.

The offer period is set on Dec. 10-14 while the listing date is tentatively slated on Dec. 19.

Funds raised from the primary offer will be used to buy double-hull tanker vessels, upgrade existing tankers from single hull to double hull and acquire dry-bulk carriers.

Petrolift has tapped BDO Capital and Investment Corp. and SB Capital Investment Corp. as lead underwriters for the planned IPO.

"Currently, we have the largest number of double-hull compliant tankers in the country today. The IPO would give us more flexibility to upgrade our existing fleet as well as enter into other profitable and viable markets," said Clarissa Leonio-Asuncion, Petrolift chief financial officer.

Petrolift has grown from a one tanker-barge with a two million liter capacity in 1992 to a fleet of 10 ships. Current assets also stood at P4.7 billion from a mere P70 million in 1992.

Gross revenues have grown at a compounded annual growth rate of 27 percent from the start of the company's operations to end-2006.

Petrolift earlier said it was preparing to relaunch its newly fitted double-hull vessel this month, ahead of an April 2008 deadline set by the state-led Maritime Industry Authority (Marina) to phase out single-hull tankers in transporting oil and gas products.

Petrolift said its double-hull vessel was one of the six tanker-barges used to transport fuel oil and was being retrofitted to add an outer hull that provides an additional layer of protection against spillage resulting from a collision.

This will be the fourth double-hull vessel in Petrolift's fleet.

Earlier this year, Marina reiterated its call for maritime logistics providers transporting oil products to convert their single-hull vessels to double-hull, double-bottom tankers by April 23 next year, in compliance with international standards.

The decision to require maritime logistics providers to shift to double-hull tankers from single hulls is in line with the government's efforts to protect the Philippines' diverse marine ecosystem, which has fallen victim to oil spillage.

Teves: Transco bidding will push through

From page B1

"The trend now is that the assets we're selling have fetched much higher prices. We still have to discuss the reserve price, but that won't be until the day of the actual bidding. But if we go by the trend, I'm hopeful that (the Transco bidding) will be consistent with the pattern that we've seen so far," he said.

The auction for the Transco concession is currently in hot water, with two senators calling it a charade and a disqualified bidder filing a case against the state-owned Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. or PSALM and some of the agency's officials.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and Sen. Jamby Madrigal have raised the issue of conflict of interest, pointing out that PSALM president Jose Ibazeta was known to be close to businessman Enrique Razon Jr., a close friend of First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo and head of the consortium composed of Monte Oro Grid Resources Corp. and State Grid Corp. of China.

The Monte Oro-State Grid consortium was one of the four groups qualified to submit final bids for the Transco concession on Dec. 12.

Madrigal also linked presidential brother Diosdado "Buboy" Macapagal Jr. and the Aboitiz family, known to be administration allies, to the Monte Oro consortium.

Responding to the conflict-of-interest issue raised against him, Ibazeta said PSALM was a collegial body and he was in no position to decide unilaterally for or against anyone, particularly when it came to bidding matters.

On the Macapagal and Aboitiz issue, he said there was nothing in the documents required from the prospective bidders that linked the Aboitizes or Macapagal to the Transco bid.

CURRENCIES

November 29, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.674172	1.000000	42.7980
Japan	Yen	0.006124	0.009083	0.3887
United Kingdom	Pound	1.403357	2.081600	89.0883
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.086609	0.128467	5.4981
Switzerland	Franc	0.606543	0.899685	38.5047
Canada	Dollar	0.684439	1.015228	43.4497
Singapore	Dollar	0.467137	0.692905	29.6549
Australia	Dollar	0.595085	0.882690	37.7774
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.800193	2.670227	114.2804
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.181718	0.269542	11.5359
Brunei	Dollar	0.465524	0.690512	29.5525
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000071	0.000106	0.0045
Thailand	Baht	0.021889	0.032468	1.3896
UAE	Dirham	0.184301	0.273373	11.6998
EU	Euro	1.000000	1.483300	63.4823
Korea	Won	0.000724	0.001074	0.0460
China	Yuan**	0.091172	0.135236	5.7878
Denmark	Kroner	0.134108	0.198922	8.5135
India	Rupee	0.017042	0.025278	1.0818
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.199459	0.295858	12.6621
New Zealand	Dollar	0.519393	0.770416	32.9723
Sweden	Kroner	0.106879	0.158534	6.7849
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.020868	0.030953	1.3247

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY time—Nov. 28, 2007
* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen. ** Asian time closing rate as of Nov. 28, 2007

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of November 29, 2007)

52-WEEK HIGH	52-WEEK LOW	STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
		BANKS					
17.5	6.8	Asiatrust Development Bank Inc.	8.3	8.4	8.3	8.3	175,000
73	43	Banco de Oro-EPCI Inc.	57	58	56	56	3,229,700
73.5	53	Bank of the Philippine Islands	63.5	64.5	61.5	62.5	4,126,600
748	544	China Banking Corp.	680	680	670	670	650
23.5	14	Citystate Savings Bank	22.75	23	22.75	23	600
0.63	0.36	Export and Industry Bank Inc.	0.38	0.39	0.38	0.39	2,100,000
75.5	47.5	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.	55.5	56.5	53.5	54	2,993,500
65.5	39	Philippine National Bank	44	44.5	42	44.5	771,000
68	46	Philippine Savings Bank	60.5	61	60.5	61	1,500
39.57	20	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	24	24.5	23.75	24.25	2,216,300
90	61	Security Bank Corp.	72	72	70	70	133,200
66	42	Union Bank of the Philippines	44	44.5	43.5	43.5	444,700
		OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
5.6	1.92	ATR KimEng Financial Corp.	4	4	4	4	25,000
2.22	0.6	Bankard Inc.	1.94	1.96	1.88	1.9	3,957,000
16.25	4.6	CitisecOnline.com Inc.	11.5	11.5	10.5	11	2,234,100
1.6	0.5	First Abacus Financial Holdings Corp.	0.91	0.91	0.91	0.91	50,000
5.9	4.8	I-Remit Inc.	5	5	4.8	4.8	1,065,000
1,970.00	1,580.00	Manulife Financial Corp.	1,705.00	1,710.00	1,705.00	1,710.00	1,590
5	2.7	National Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	3.05	3.05	2.85	2.9	4,480,000
1,390.00	260	The Philippine Stock Exchange Inc.	1,080.00	1,130.00	1,040.00	1,040.00	60,060
2,500.00	1,970.00	Sun Life Financial Inc.	2,220.00	2,225.00	2,220.00	2,225.00	820
1.94	1.3	iVantage Corp	1.48	1.52	1.48	1.48	2,004,000
		ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
6.2	3.8	Aboitiz Power Corp.	4.9	5.2	4.9	5.1	6,592,000
0.57	0.22	East Asia Power Resources Corp.	0.3	0.33	0.28	0.3	1,870,000
70.5	49	First Gen Corp.	58	59	56.5	56.5	2,384,700
92	51	First Phil. Holdings Corp.	67	68.5	62.5	64	3,065,700
17.5	8.8	Manila Water Co. Inc.	17	17	16.5	16.75	12,533,500
105.45	27.73	Manila Electric Co.	73	76.5	71	72.5	4,292,600
7.8	4.1	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	6.9	7	6.7	6.9	25,184,000
7.4	3.95	Petron Corp.	6	6.2	5.7	5.7	18,762,000
14.75	6.4	Phoenix Petroleum Philippines Inc.	6.9	7	6.7	6.7	275,000
2.04	0.91	Trans-Asia Oil and Energy Dev't Corp.	1.28	1.44	1.28	1.34	12,907,000
		FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
6.3	3.4	Alaska Milk Corp.	4.85	4.85	4.8	4.8	936,000
2.32	1.48	Alliance Tuna International Inc.	1.56	1.62	1.48	1.52	4,240,000
28.5	19.5	Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	23.5	23.5	22.5	22.5	15,800
61	39	Jollibee Foods Corp.	48.5	51	48.5	49.5	2,924,900
9.1	5.7	Pancake House Inc.	8.5	8.5	8.5	8.5	40,000
0.98	0.5	RFM Corp.	0.69	0.69	0.69	0.69	460,000
3.3	2.06	Roxas Holdings	2.7	2.7	2.65	2.7	701,000
80	42.5	San Miguel Corp. "A"	48	51.5	47.5	50	470,300
88	43	San Miguel Corp. "B"	48.5	52	48	50.5	2,096,100
0.66	0.33	Swift Foods Inc.	0.43	0.43	0.43	0.43	10,000
6.5	3	Tanduay Holdings Inc.	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	10,000
20.75	13.5	Universal Robina Corp.	14.5	14.75	14	14	1,303,600
		CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
6.1	2.65	EEI Corp.	4.65	4.65	4.3	4.6	2,743,000
9.2	4.95	Holcim Philippines Inc.	7.9	7.9	7.8	7.9	689,000
2	0.81	Southeast Asia Cement Holdings Inc.	1	1.04	0.94	0.97	6,230,000
23	1.48	TKC Steel Corp.	9.5	9.6	8.7	8.8	1,534,000
		CHEMICALS					
6.3	3.75	Chemrez Technologies Inc.	4.2	4.25	4	4.05	842,000
2.4	1.31	Euro-Med Laboratories Phil. Inc.	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	20,000
1.4	0.61	Interphil Laboratories Inc. "B"	1	1	1	1	50,000
1.46	0.51	Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.86	60,000
		DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
0.75	0.17	Picop Resources Inc.	0.37	0.38	0.34	0.35	12,130,000
9	6.2	Splash Corp.	7.1	7.1	6.2	6.2	1,390,000
		HOLDING FIRMS					
39	18.75	ABS-CBN Holdings Corp.-PDR	34	34	34	34	10,800
3.9	2.7	A. Soriano Corp.	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	283,000
0.185	0.0525	AJO.net Holdings Inc.	0.125	0.125	0.11	0.11	165,710,000
1.28	0.29	APC Group Inc.	0.62	0.63	0.57	0.59	1,810,000
3.65	1.5	ATN Holdings Inc. "A"	2.65	2.65	2.4	2.5	197,000
3.7	1.5	ATN Holdings Inc. "B"	2.95	2.95	2.95	2.95	1,000
0.018	0.0075	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. "A"	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	44,000,000
9.7	5.8	Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc.	6.8	6.9	6.8	6.8	729,000
0.021	0.0095	Alcorn Gold Resources Corp.	0.014	0.015	0.014	0.015	37,100,000
7.3	3.5	Alliance Global Group Inc.	5.6	5.8	5.5	5.7	55,139,000
1.38	0.59	Alsons Consolidated Resources Inc.	0.74	0.74	0.71	0.72	250,000
2.9	0.89	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.	2.48	2.5	2.42	2.42	3,490,000
8	0.8	Aries Prime Resources Inc.	3	3	3	3	13,000
645	397.92	Ayala Corp.	565	575	550	560	1,849,050
5.8	1.64	Benpres Holdings Corp.	3.9	4	3.7	3.9	3,926,000
12	5	DMCI Holdings Inc.	10.5	10.5	9.6	9.8	1,823,000
8	3.15	Filinvest Development Corp.	6.5	6.5	6.3	6.5	120,000
3.55	1.76	House of Investments Inc.	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	135,000
14.5	8.7	JG Summit Holdings Inc.	10	10	9.8	9.8	194,000
5.9	0.61	Jolliville Holdings Corp.	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58	1,000
0.8	0.23	MEDCO Holdings Inc.	0.45	0.54	0.45	0.54	350,000
11.5	1.5	Minerales Industrias Corp.	6.8	6.8	5.9	6.1	6,447,000
8.5	3	PAL Holdings Inc.	5.6	5.7	5.5	5.5	70,000
0.28	0.016	Pacifica Inc. "A"	0.24	0.25	0.22	0.23	1,015,060,000
0.75	0.19	Prime Orion Philippines Inc.	0.5	0.53	0.47	0.47	10,260,000
452.5	268.53	SM Investments Corp.	350	355	327.5	327.5	257,880
2.1	1.08	Seafront Resources Corp.	1.12	1.12	1.12	1.12	2,000
0.73	0.14	Sinophil Corp.	0.36	0.36	0.34	0.34	4,740,000
0.75	0.1	Wellex Industries Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.29	0.29	5,230,000
1.1	0.26	Zeus Holdings Inc.	0.68	0.68	0.51	0.51	210,000
		PROPERTY					
2.34	1	A Brown Co. Inc.	1.52	1.52	1.44	1.46	405,000
8.9	5	Anchor Land Holdings Inc.	7.1	7.4	7	7.4	168,000
19.25	11.88	Ayala Land Inc.	15.5	15.75	15.25	15.25	39,791,800
1.88	1	Belle Corp.	1.22	1.22	1.12	1.12	4,746,000
4.7	3.05	Cebu Holdings Inc.	3.5	3.7	3.2	3.7	2,341,000
3.83	1.9	City and Land Developers Inc.	2	2	1.9	1.9	156,000
0.86	0.39	Crown Equities Inc.	0.59	0.59	0.58	0.58	150,000
0.83	0.24	Cyber Bay Corp.	0.4	0.41	0.34	0.34	18,080,000
0.99	0.52	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.74	0.74	0.71	0.73	9,680,000
6.9	1.08	Eton Properties Philippines Inc.	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	15,000
0.47	0.0575	Ever Gotesco Resources and Hold'gs Inc.	0.235	0.235	0.225	0.225	4,930,000
1.48	0.61	Fil-Estate Land Inc.	1.06	1.06	0.97	1	23,996,000
2.44	1.28	Filinvest Land Inc.	1.56	1.6	1.46	1.48	60,801,000
1.12	0.31	MRC Allied Industries Inc.	0.49	0.49	0.46	0.46	530,000
4.6	1.96	Megaworld Corp.	3.9	4	3.75	3.9	51,246,000
6.4	1.5	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.	3.9	3.9	3.75	3.75	600,000
5.2	2.2	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.-Warrants	2.7	2.75	2.6	2.6	492,000
0.7	0.125	Phil. Estates Corp.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	70,000
0.86	0.32	Philippine Realty and Holdings Corp.	0.43	0.5	0.42	0.43	2,700,000
9.2	1.36	Polar Property Holdings Corp.	4.5	4.5	4.4	4.4	80,000
23	14.5	Robinson Land Corp.	18.5	18.75	18	18.25	4,408,100
5.9	1.93	SM Development Corp.	4	4	3.8	3.8	765,000
13.5	7.6	SM Prime Holdings Inc.	11.5	11.75	11.25	11.5	8,795,500
3.25	1.5	Shang Properties Inc.	2.26	2.26	2.22	2.22	193,000
4.5	0.38	Sta. Lucia Land Inc.	2.04	2.04	1.9	1.92	604,000
1.34	0.46	Suntrust Home Developers Inc.	0.55	0.55	0.5	0.5	1,130,000
0.49	0.09	Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.245	0.245	6,780,000
7.5	3.65	Vista Land and Lifescapes Inc.	4.9	4.95	4.9	4.9	21,190,000
		MEDIA					
38.5	18.75	ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	34	34	33.5	34	326,400
12	7.6	GMA Holdings Inc.	7.8	8.1	7.8	7.8	3,235,000
11.75	7.5	GMA Network Inc.	7.7	7.9	7.7	7.8	472,000
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
2.12	1.1	Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc.	1.32	1.34	1.28	1.28	4,180,000
1,750.00	1,180.00	Globe Telecom Inc.	1,510.00	1,560.00	1,510.00	1,520.00	63,160
3,285.00	2,250.00	Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co.	3,040.00	3,105.00	3,040.00	3,100.00	179,920
8.1	5.5	Pilipino Telephone Corp.	7.2	7.3	6.7	7.1	3,392,000
		INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
0.39	0.17	Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.18	0.18	1,880,000
15.5	2.1	Diversified Financial Network Inc.	13.75	13.75	12.5	13.25	3,208,800
11.5	2.5	IPVG Corp.	7.6	7.9	7.4	7.8	1,735,000
0.065	0.027	ISM Communications Corp.	0.039	0.039	0.036	0.038	41,700,000
0.32	0.05	Island Information and Technology Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.17	0.17	7,450,000
2.08	1.1	Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.34	1.34	1.3	1.34	1,000,000
0.0725	0.03	Philweb Corp.	0.048	0.049	0.046	0.047	77,000,000
5.8	1.64	Transpacific Broadband Group Int'l. Inc.	2.6	2.6	2.48	2.55	1,342,000
		TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
2.14	1.14	Aboitiz Transport System Corp.	1.3	1.3	1.28	1.28	232,000
48	18.75	Int'l Container Terminal Services Inc.	43.5	48	43.5	47	8,290,500
2.04	1.12	Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	25,000
		HOTEL & LEISURE					
4.25	1.8	Leisure and Resorts World Corp.	2.24	2.42	2.24	2.42	221,000
1.16	0.32	Premiere Entertainment Productions Inc.	1.02	1.02	0.96	0.97	9,170,000
1.2	0.54	Waterfront Philippines Inc.	0.85	0.87	0.83	0.84	1,990,000
		EDUCATION					
3.7	2.6	iPeople Inc.	3.15	3.15	3.15	3.15	13,000
		DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
6	2.04	Macroasia Corp.	4.85	4.85	4.5	4.55	67,000
17.25	9.8	Pacific Online Systems Corp.	11.25	11.25	11	11	78,000
30	6.2	Paxys Inc.	7	7.1	6.2	6.8	885,000
472.5	390	eTelecare Global Solutions Inc.	445	460	425	442.5	74,700
		MINING					
0.017	0.0085	Abra Mining and Industrial Corp.	0.011	0.011	0.01	0.01	97,000,000
7.2	3.6	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "A"	6.7	7	6.3	6.5	5,729,000
7.4	3.85	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "B"	7	7.3	6.6	6.8	3,177,000
21.25	7.8	Atlas Cons. Mining and Dev't Corp.	12.75	13.25	12.5	12.75	1,255,500
14.25	8.9	Benguet Corp. "A"	12	13.25	12	13	376,700
12.75	1.96	Dizon Copper Silver Mines Inc.	9.4	9.5	8.5	8.7	266,000
3.1	0.6	Geograce Resources Philippines Inc.	1.94	2	1.74	1.82	110,573,000
0.56	0.18	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "A"	0.53	0.53	0.47	0.48	274,980,000
0.61	0.22	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "B"	0.57	0.58	0.51	0.53	133,860,000
0.038	0.017	Manila Mining Corp. "A"	0.029	0.03	0.027	0.028	663,100,000
0.041	0.02	Manila Mining Corp. "B"	0.032	0.034	0.032	0.032	812,400,000
30	3.6	NiHAO Minerals Resources Int'l Inc.	20.75	21	18	19.25	3,560,000
0.021	0.0088	Omico Corp.	0.015	0.015	0.013	0.014	1,520,700,000
0.015	0.007	Omico Corp.-Warrants	0.0095	0.0095	0.009	0.009	63,000,000
11.25	3.5	Philex Mining Corp.	9.8	9.9	9.4	9.8	10,322,000
49.5	14.75	Semirara Mining Corp.	46	49.5	46	46	1,682,000
1.36	0.55	United Paragon Mining Corp.	0.68	0.68	0.65	0.65	1,310,000
1.8	0.85	Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp.	1.12	1.12	1.08	1.08	3,581,000
		OIL					
0.58	0.25	Basic Energy Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	5,420,000
0.029	0.01	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. "A"	0.023	0.024	0.022	0.022	252,800,000
0.03	0.01	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. "B"	0.026	0.026	0.024	0.025	111,000,000
13.75	9	Petroenergy Resources Corp.	10	10	9.9	9.9	151,000
0.032	0.0095	The Philodrill Corp.	0.028	0.028	0.026	0.026	657,600,000

	AVERAGES		VOLUME	VALUE
Financial	862.98 UP	4.19	30,070,320	853,367,345.00
Industrial	4,152.69 UP	41.66	126,762,200	1,568,173,575.00
Holding Firms	1,982.42 DOWN	11.38	1,359,396,930	1,793,534,340.00
Property	1,570.76 DOWN	7.69	264,351,400	1,270,962,880.00
Service	1,864.57 UP	57.73	164,975,480	1,200,605,505.00
Mining & Oil	8,286.26 DOWN	168.46	4,670,843,200	855,951,575.00
All Shares Index	2,172.57 UP	15.20		
PSEI	3,578.55 UP	41.55		
		GRAND TOTALS	6,616,399,530	7,542,595,220.00

COMPILED BY SCHATZI QUODALA, INQUIRER RESEARCH
SOURCE: TECHNISTOCK, PSE

Oil prices drop below $91

SINGAPORE—OIL EASED BELOW $91 ON Friday, after giving up all its gains in the previous session as a fire-damaged Canada-to-United States oil pipeline could resume operation within days.

US crude shed 6 cents to $90.95 a barrel by early yesterday afternoon.

It settled up 39 cents at $91.01 a barrel on Thursday after zipping as high as $95.17 earlier in the day.

"Investors are shaking their heads as oil prices rose almost $4 and then fell by the same level within 24 hours," said Tony Nunan, a risk manager for Mitsubishi Corp.

"I still think this is a serious issue but investors have decided to take a wait-and-see stance after they took profits, but we may see oil prices going up again if the market sees a draw in inventories because of the incident."

An explosion along the Enbridge Pipeline, which supplies more than 10 percent of US crude imports, killed two workers and choked off crude flows on Wednesday.

But the operator said on Thursday that three of the four pipelines shut had already been restarted, and that the remaining line could return to service within a few days, easing concerns of a severe supply disruption.

The US Department of Energy said it was prepared to open up the emergency crude stockpile to compensate for the disruption, but had yet to receive any requests.

Oil had risen more than 40 percent since August and has come close to breaking the $100 mark, driven by the weak dollar, concerns over shrinking supplies ahead of winter and speculative plays.

But prices have fallen back from the highs amid rising worries over the US economy, a rally in the dollar and expectations of a supply increase from the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec).

Opec is set to meet on Dec. 5 in Abu Dhabi, with some members favoring a boost to production. *Reuters*

A VENDOR arranges cabbage at a vegetable market in Nanjing, Jiangsu province. Worries that China's economy might be overheating are overblown, said a senior economist. REUTERS

Stocks rise after Bernanke comments on US economy

Another cut in Federal rates expected

HONG KONG—ASIAN STOCKS hit two-week highs on Friday and the yen slipped after comments from Federal Reserve Chair Ben Bernanke reinforced expectations of a further US interest rate cut, fueling appetite for risk.

Those rate views were set to lift stocks in Europe as well, with financial bookmakers expecting opening gains of up to 0.5 percent for all three major equity indexes.

Oil steadied near $91 a barrel after shedding overnight gains on news that a fire-damaged Canada-to-US pipeline could resume operation within days, while gold wallowed below $800 an ounce, dulled by the fall in oil.

Stock investors took heart after Bernanke told the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce that a resurgence in financial strains had dimmed the outlook for the US economy, and the Fed would "have to remain exceptionally alert and flexible."

"Any indication of a rate cut is greatly received because if the US economy achieves a soft landing, the market can hold up and move ahead next year," said Hans Kunnen, head of investment markets research at Colonial First State in Sydney.

"We all know that the housing sector is going to contract and hurt. The question is to what extent can you save the rest of the economy?"

Bernanke's comments came after weaker-than-expected new home sales and a surge in claims for new jobless benefits took the gloss off revised figures showing the US economy grew at 4.9 percent in the third quarter, the best performance in four years.

Tokyo's Nikkei average ended 1.1 percent higher, while MSCI's measure of other Asia Pacific stocks climbed 1.4 percent by early yesterday afternoon to two-week highs.

Markets had risen a day earlier after Fed Vice Chair Donald Kohn boosted rate cut talk by saying renewed financial market turmoil could slow the US economy and the Fed had to be flexible.

Despite the recent rise, the MSCI index is set to fall by about 5 percent in November, its biggest monthly fall since May 2006, when it slid 6.6 percent.

The index was still down 9 percent from its Nov. 11 peak, but up 35 percent this year, more than three times the gains for MSCI's key world stock index.

Bank stocks, eschewed by investors on fears of credit-related losses, were generally firmer thanks to hopes of a US rate cut.

Japan's Mizuho Financial, South Korea's Woori Finance Holdings and Australia's Westpac Banking Corp. all rose more than 2 percent, but Citigroup fell 3.1 percent in Tokyo after reversing early gains.

Big miners fared better in line with gains in copper prices as investors bet that lower US rates would help boost economic growth and lift demand for industrial metals.

In Malaysia, plantations-to-energy group Sime Darby relisted at a 36-percent premium to its indicated price after a merger with two other palm-oil groups. It is now the world's largest listed palm-oil company by value.

Against the backdrop of improving risk-taking appetite, the low-yielding yen slipped.

The dollar popped above 110 yen from an overnight low of around 109.45 yen, while the euro rose to 162.60 yen from Thursday's low near 161.50 yen.

Against the dollar, the single currency hovered near $1.4740 off the overnight high of $1.4845.

Despite strength in equity markets, Japanese government bonds rose as the market took its cue from US Treasuries, which were boosted by weak US economic data overnight.

The yield on the 10-year benchmark Japanese government bond eased 1.5 ticks to 1.47 percent as a result.

Money markets were in a bit of a bind especially South Korea and India, where official curbs on foreign borrowing as well as precautionary risk reduction by banks are taking a toll. *Reuters*

Boehringer Ingelheim named top employer

INGELHEIM, GERMANY—BOEHringer Ingelheim has been named 2007's Top Employer in the pharmaceutical industry by Science magazine.

"This success has not been created overnight," said Mikael Dolsten, executive vice president for pharma research at Boehringer Ingelheim, highlighting the critical importance of innovation.

"Rather, it is a result of decades of Boehringer Ingelheim's dedication to research and innovation as the drivers for producing new and better medicines for patients," Dolsten added.

Boehringer Ingelheim has been steadily climbing the rankings of Science Magazine, from 8th place in 2005 to 2nd last year.

This year, it was finally ranked the top firm.

The Boehringer Ingelheim group is one of the world's 20 leading pharmaceutical companies.

Based in Ingelheim, Germany, it operates globally with 137 affiliates in 47 countries, including the Philippines, and 38,400 employees.

Japan's economy gives mixed signs: prices up, housing dips

TOKYO—JAPAN'S ECONOMY GOT A mixed report card for October on Friday, with the government saying core consumer prices had risen for the first time in 10 months—a positive sign—but that housing starts posted a double-digit drop.

Household spending rose for the third straight month, but less than expected, while the jobless rate held steady at 4.0 percent.

The numbers come amid concerns that slower growth in the United States, a key export market, the yen's recent appreciation and higher oil prices could crimp Japan's economy.

"Fears about a US economic slowdown have been growing," Economy Minister Hiroko Ota told reporters. The government will need to monitor "how such fears will affect consumer spending in the US and the Japanese economy."

Analysts said the figures, while mixed, show that the world's No. 2 economy remains on the growth track, but that smaller companies may be feeling some pressure.

"The data on the whole still support the view that the economy is recovering modestly, but they also show that some areas are still lagging," said Taro Saito, senior economist, NLI Research Institute. "Small-to-medium sized business are finding it difficult to generate a profit, and that's putting a limit on the room for improvement."

The news about a 0.1 percent rise in core consumer price index in October was welcome as it was the first year-on-year increase since last December.

But the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications said the gain was largely due to higher energy prices. Excluding food and energy, the CPI was down 0.3 percent in October, the ministry said, the same as in September.

Analysts said the latest figures don't show that Japan has fully emerged from deflation, a state when a continual decline in prices can erode corporate profits, paychecks and overall economic growth.

"The data are a reflection of rising material prices across the globe, with the domestic economy showing little sign of inflation," said Atsushi Nakajima, chief economist at Mizuho Research Institute.

Surging oil prices—which have hit record highs near $100 a barrel in recent weeks—could harm consumer spending as well as business investment here, economists warned.

Finance Minister Fukushiro Nukaga told reporters he planned to keep a close watch on both the impact of oil prices on overall price conditions and job conditions.

In other data released Friday, Japan's overall household spending rose an inflation-adjusted 0.6 percent in October from a year earlier, according to the ministry. It was the third straight month of increases but smaller than the 0.7 percent gain expected by economists.

Later Friday, the Land Ministry said housing starts fell 35 percent in October from a year earlier to 76,920 units, though from September, the figure rose 22.1 percent, the first increase since June. *AP*

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education
Region IV-A CALABARZON
Rizal Provincial Capitol Compound, Pasig City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Department of Education, Region IV-A through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers, manufacturers to apply for eligibility and to Bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project	Supply & Delivery of Payroll Line Printer, Decollator, Burster, CPU Server & Safety Vault
Location	DepED IV-A Rizal Provincial Capitol Compound Pasig City (Property Office)
ABC & Funding Source	GOP
Contract Duration	Thirty (30) calendar days

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations of RA 9184 known as the Government Procurement Act, and is restricted to bonafide suppliers of the above-mentioned project. Only bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened.

Bids in excess of the Approved Budget for the Contract shall be rejected. The award shall be made on a per item basis.

The Approved Budget for each item to be purchased are as follows:

-4- unit Line printer ..... Php 500,000.00
Specifications:
- Printing Speed: 1,500 lines per minute
- Maximum Resolution: 180 dpi horizontal x 144 dpi vertical
- Printable Width: up to 13.6" (345.4 mru)
- Emulation Standard: Printronix P-series XQ, Serial Matrix, IBM Proprinter III XL, Epson FX 1050
- Interfaces: RS232 RS422 IEEE 1284 Centronix Parallel diagnostic Port, Network interface 10/100 Base T
- Paper Type: continuous, fan-folded, edge perforation
- Paper Width: 3" to 17" (up to 6 parts copies)
- Forms Control: 14 & 12 electronics vertical format/paper-out/paper motion detector alarm
- Paper Path: straight through paper path with easy load dual adjustable tractors top and rear paper-exit paths
- Consumable: Ultra Capacity SPOOL TYPE RIBBON 90 million characters
- Printer Features: Integrated Part Management, Auto Platen Return lever, Automatic Ribbon Life Monitor
- Warranty: One year & six months on side on parts & labor

-1- unit Decollator (4-part) Php 650,000.00
Specifications:
- separates multi-ply carbonized continuous form documents
- variable speed controls
- speed capacity 4.75 feet per minute
- document size: width of up to 19:, length of up to 14"
- left & right tractor feeds, start/stop jogging switches, plexy-glass, safety cover
- carbon rewind spindles, reverse, recollating switch
- with trim-catch waste basket
- center slitter paper control rod for carbonless form
- voltage 220v, UL listed/CSA and TUV certified
- made in USA
- Warranty: One year & six months on site on parts & labor

1- unit Burster ..... Php 250,000.00
Specifications:
- slits and burst single ply forms
- speed capacity up to 6,100 8 & 1/2" forms/hour or 15,300 3 & 1/2" per hour
- document size: width of up to 17", length of up to 12"
- left & right margin slitters which are self-sharpening high carbon, steel and adjust from 1/2 to 3/4 trim
- start/stop switches, plexi-glass safety cover
- voltage 220v
- made in USA
- Warranty: one year & six months on parts & labor on site

-1- unit Safety Vault ..... Php 55,800.00
Specifications:
- 500 kilos
- Single combination lock
- Outside Over All -60-7/8"H x 26-7/8" W x 29-3/8" D
- Inside Clear - 48 - 1/2" H x 20-3/8" W x 19-3/8" D
- Fire Resisting Monolithic Insulation
- Counter Spy-Combination Lock Capable of 1,000,000 changes
- Bolt Work - Door is fitted with sliding solid steel chrome-plated locking bolts
- Automatic Bolt Lock
- Drill Resistant Plate
- Mechanical Lock
- Warranty: One year on parts and labor on site

-2- unit CPU Server ..... Php 250,000.00
Specifications:

Processor	Xeon Processor 3.2 GHz/800MHz/EM64T
Positioning	Dual Processor capable - 1U Rack
Cache	2 x 2MB
Front Side Bus (FSD)	800MHz
Chipset	Intel E7520
Memory (std./max.) 1GB	(2x512MB) PC2 4200 400MHz ECC DDR2 (16GB Max)
Optical Drive	3X - 24X DVD - ROM
HDD	1 x 73.4 GBGB 10K Ultra320 SCSI Hot-swap HDD
FDD	1.44 MB Floppy Disk Drive
Mirror	3x73.4GBGB 10K Ultra 320 SCSI Hot-swap HDD
Monitor	17" IBMCRT Monitor
Video Memory	ATI 7000M on Planar/16MB SDRAM Std/Max
SCSI Controller	LSI Logic 53C 1020/Ultra 320 SCSI Controller, 1 internal/no external
Network	2xIntegrated 10/100/1000 Gigabit Ethernet/Broadcom 5721
Diagnostics	Drop Down Light Path Diagnostics Pull Out from front panel
Keyboard	PS/2 or USB Keyboard
Mouse	USB Optical Wheel Mouse
Audio	Built-in
Operating System	Microsoft Windows XP Professional Microsoft Office 2003
Expansion Slots	1 x 64-bit 100MHz PCI x 1.0 half size 1 x 64-bit 122MHz PCI x 1.0
Ports	External Microphone, 1VGA-external display, Headphone/Line out, keyboard (P/S2), 2 PS2 mouse 1 Parallel, RJ-45, 2 Serial 2USB 2.0 front, 4USB 2.0 (back)
Power Supply	1 xz 585W Hot-swap/2 PS Maximum
Software	Server Guide, IBM Director, etc.
Warranty	Three years on parts & labor, three years on site

Hereunder is the schedule of BAC activities:

Advertisement	November 29 - December 5, 2007
Issuance of Bid Documents	December 5 - 10, 2007
Pre-bid Conference	December 13, 2007 at 2:00 p.m.
Opening of Bids	December 21, 2007 at 2:00 p.m.

Bid Documents shall be available from the Supply Office upon presentation of a Letter of Intent and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of Two Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (Php2,500.00) only at the Cashier's Office.

The DepEd Region IV-A reserves the right to accept or reject any bid and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder/s

(Sgd.) ROSE MARIE FELICIDAD V. SAET
Director III
BAC Chairman

(PDI--December 1, 2007)

IMF pessimistic on world economy

WASHINGTON—THE INTERNATIONAL Monetary Fund on Thursday warned that persistent turmoil in financial markets and higher oil prices had cast a darker cloud over global growth prospects for next year.

Less than two months since its last health check on the world economy, the IMF is now likely to revise down its global growth estimate of 4.8 percent for next year, as risks identified in October had now materialized, IMF spokesperson Masood Ahmed said.

"We do think that recent turbulence in both oil and financial markets have further dampened the global outlook," Ahmed told a regular briefing for reporters.

"Some of the downside risks that we had identified (in October) have materialized," he said, adding: "We do see now the downside risks as being greater to the baseline scenario than we had and we will be likely shaving down that baseline scenario at the end of the year."

Ahmed said strong third-quarter economic activity in several advanced and emerging economies meant global growth for 2007 could exceed the IMF's October estimate of 5.2 percent.

Still, he said higher global oil prices had an impact on consumers and in the United States had shown it was directly affecting inflation.

"The combination of rising food and fuel costs are exerting pressures on household budgets," Ahmed said, "and also means that central banks may find less room for maneuver in responding to weakening demand caused by the financial turbulence, given concerns that higher fuel costs could have second-round effects on inflation," Ahmed said.

He did not offer any new figures, saying those would be released in January in an update of the fund's bi-annual World Economic Outlook, which will be released in full in the spring.

Since October, Ahmed said credit and money markets were still under stress and estimates of bank losses had risen.

The IMF's warning comes as the fallout of problems in the US sub-prime mortgage market appears to be deepening as banks in the United States and Europe have announced billions of dollars in mortgage-related losses while equities have fallen around the world.

He warned that the outlook could also change for emerging market economies, which have been broadly unaffected by the turmoil that emerged out of the United States and spread into European markets.

Ahmed said tightening global credit conditions could present problems for emerging economies down the road, especially in countries where rapid credit growth was financed by large-scale foreign bank loans.

He said the US Federal Reserve's interest rate cuts had been well timed so far and should support US growth.

"In view of the financial market strains and the downside macroeconomic risks to growth and moderate core inflation readings for the past month, the Fed's accumulative 75 basis point easing has so far been well timed and we think should support growth while maintaining low inflation," he said. *Reuters*

New round of bank branching liberalization OKd

Move seen to make credit accessible to small businesses

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG Pilipinas approved on Thursday a new wave of bank branching liberalization to benefit the underserved market—particularly small businesses and the entrepreneurial poor.

In 2005, the BSP implemented a selective lifting of the bank branching moratorium. This allowed the establishment of new bank branches except in certain restricted areas—such as Makati, Mandaluyong, Manila, Parañaque, Pasay, Pasig, Quezon and San Juan, which were believed to be adequately served by existing branches.

"The recent move is expected to further enhance competition in the banking system and make banking services accessible in underserved areas," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said Thursday after the Monetary Board meeting.

BSP Deputy Governor for bank supervision and examination Nestor Espenilla Jr. said the liberalization would have several components. The first allows microfinance rural banks with a minimum capital of P100 million to establish branches even in the restricted areas in Metro Manila.

Another key component of the liberalization, Espenilla said, allowed regular rural banks and thrift banks based outside Metro Manila to put up branches in restricted areas to establish a nationwide presence.

Third, rural and thrift banks that meet the minimum capitalization requirement can now establish office outside their area.

"For example, rural banks based in a small towns may set up in a large city without having to meet the minimum capitalization for that city. This is to diversify the business of the bank," Espenilla said.

The fourth component is the liberalization of nonbranch or nondeposit-taking units of banks that are in good standing, recognizing that banks have become more innovative, with some creating mini outlets called express banking centers for loan collection and disbursement.

To be considered in good standing, they must meet the minimum capitalization and capital adequacy requirements and maintain a minimum bank rating.

Under the new rules, these banks will have to give the BSP a 30-day advance notice before setting up the mini outlets.

The fifth component of the liberalization would allow loan collection disbursement points associated with microfinance to receive deposits.

"And to hasten the processing of bank branches, we will scrap some prerequisites like compliance to agri-agra and SME (small and medium enterprise) mandated lending," Espenilla said.

The BSP also scrapped the 200-meter minimum distance requirement between branches. In the past, the requirement was waived only in shopping malls or commercial center complexes, special export processing zones, public markets, fish ports, livestock/agricultural trading centers, Bureau of Internal Revenue collection offices and industrial/technological parks.

Seaoil eyes IPO in Q1

INDEPENDENT OIL INDUSTRY player Seaoil Philippines Inc. said it was planning to go public in the first quarter of 2008 to raise fresh capital.

"Seaoil plans to sell between 20 percent and 30 percent of its capital stock to finance its nationwide expansion," said company president Francis Glenn Yu.

Formed in 1997, Seaoil is the first independent oil firm to put up a gasoline retail station in the country, following the deregulation of the local downstream oil industry. It now has 154 outlets nationwide.

Seaoil aims to put up more than 500 stations nationwide by 2011. More than 50 new stations will be opened in the next 12 months.

Since the deregulation of the local oil industry, 62 firms have entered the retail segment and invested heavily in retail outlets and storage facilities.

Based on Department of Energy statistics, gasoline stations of new players reached 602 in 2006.

Seaoil's main products are diesel, gasoline, kerosene, auto-LPG and its pioneering biofuels blend.

SEC clears four Transco bidders

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

THE LEGAL ARM OF THE SECUrities and Exchange Commission said the four bidders vying for the 25-year concession of National Transmission Corp. (Transco) were compliant with the country's foreign and local ownership laws.

This means the four groups are all qualified to participate in the bidding for the Transco concession on Dec. 12.

In four separate letters signed by SEC general counsel Vernette Umali-Paco, the Office of the General Counsel told the prospective bidders that they had been deemed compliant with the requirements of the Philippine Constitution to operate a public utility franchise.

The four bidders are the consortium of Citadel Holdings Inc., Power Grid Corp. of India Ltd. and British company Actis Infrastructure; the group of San Miguel Energy Corp., Dutch firm TPG Aurora BV and Malaysia'sTNB Prai Sdn Bhd.; the consortium of Monte Oro Grid Resources Corp. (which is identified with businessmen Enrique Razon, Walter Brown and Wealth Securities), Calaca High Power Corp. and State Grid Corp. of China; and the group of Two Rivers Pacific Holdings Corp. of Manuel Pangilinan with Italy's Terna Rete Elettrica Nazionale S.p.A.

Under the Philippine Constitution, foreigners can own only up to 40 percent of a public utility in the country.

Article XII Section 11 of the Constitution further states that no franchise, certificate or any other form of authorization for the operation of a public utility shall be granted except to citizens of the Philippines or to corporations organized under the laws of the Philippines, of which at least 60 percent of the capital stock outstanding is held by citizens of the Philippines.

The OGC clearance forms part of the requirements imposed by Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM) on the prospective bidders.

Earlier, the qualification of Two Rivers Pacific and Terna-rete Elettrica was questioned. Manuelita V. Perez, a partner of Perez Golangco Madrigal Andaya Law Office, wrote PSALM on Nov. 9 saying Two Rivers could not be considered a Filipino corporation because its parent firm, Metro Pacific Investments Corp., which owns 99.99 percent of its capital, was not a Filipino company.

Perez cited a 2006 annual report of Hong Kong conglomerate First Pacific Co. Ltd. as stating that it had a 95.9-percent "economic or voting interest" in MPIC. Perez alleged that if such is the case, MPIC and Two Rivers are both foreign corporations.

The lawyer further claimed that First Pacific "tried to hide its ownership of Two Rivers in filings with the SEC by creating several layers of corporate entities and using Pangilinan to make it appear that the owners of the capital of Two Rivers comply with the nationality requirement of the Philippine Constitution."

Perez's letter was to PSALM privatization committee chair Froilan Tampinco and other concerned officials including Finance Secretary Margarito Teves, Energy Secretary Angelo Reyes, Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya, Transco president Arthur Aguilar and SEC chair Fe Barin.

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education
Region IV-A, CALABARZON
Rizal Provincial Capitol Compound, Pasig City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Department of Education, Region IV-A through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers, manufacturers to apply for eligibility and to Bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project : Supply & Delivery of Desktop Personal Computers, Laptop, Computer Printers & LCD Projectors
Location : DepED IV-A, Rizal Provincial Capitol Compound Pasig City (Property Office)
ABC & Funding Source : GOP
Contract Duration : Thirty (30) calendar days

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations of RA 9184 known as the Government Procurement Act, and is restricted to bonafide suppliers of the above-mentioned project. Only bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened.

Bids in excess of the Approved Budget for the Contract shall be rejected. The award shall be made on a per item basis.

The Approved Budget for each item to be purchased are as follows:

- 76 - unit Desktop Computers (branded) w/ Budget Monitoring Software (to be installed per unit) ..... Php 75,000.00
Specifications:
Processor : Intel Pentium D925 3.02 x 2MB 800 FSB
Memory : 2 GB DDR 2 667 MHz Memory Module (2 x 1GB Module)
Hard Disk : 160GB SATA II 7200rpm
Optical & Floppy : Super Multi-Drive DVD Writer
Floppy Drive : 1.44 MB
Audio : 5.1 channel w/ satellite speaker & 1 sub wooper
LAN : GIGABIT Ethernet
Expansion Slot : PCI Express x 16 slot 2 PCI slots
Monitor : with 19" LCD monitor (same brand w/ the CPU)
Accessories : USB Keyboard & USB Optical Mouse
Operating System : Windows XP Professional
Warranty : 3 years on parts & Labor on site
- 25 - unit Desktop Computer (branded) ..... Php 54,500.00
Specifications same as above
- 23 - unit Laser Jet Printer (black) ..... Php 10,000.00
Specifications
– up to 15 ppm, first page out in 10 secs. w/ Instant on Technology
– 1200 dpi effective output quality resolution
– 5000 pages per month duty cycle. 150 sheet main input tray
– USB 2.0 interface, windows compatible
– uses 2612A toner cartridge
– one year parts and service warranty
- 77 - unit Computer Printer LQ 300-II dot matrix ..... Php 10,500.00
- 6 - unit Computer Printer LQ 2180 dot matrix ..... Php 38,000.00
- 12 - unit Laptop ..... Php 90,000.00
Specifications
D2C T7300 (2 OC)
2GB x 2 DIMM
160 GB Hard Disk
14 " WXGA
DVD + RW light scribe
Built-in webcam
Vista (OS)
- 7 - unit LCD Projector ..... Php 70,364.00
Specifications:
– DLP Technology by texas instruments 0.55 SGVA DMD DDR
– True XGA (1024 x 768)
– XGA, SVGA, VGA, Macintosh data compatibility
– Full NTSC, PAL, SECAM, EDTV, HDTV (1080i & 720pRGBHV)
– 4:3: 16:9 aspect ratio
– 16.7 million color
– 2.5 watt mono audio
– 2000:1 contrast ratio
– +/-10 degrees vertical digital keystone correction
– throw ratio 1.2.1 zoom ratio
– Manual zoom & Manual focus zoom lens
– 2200 ANSI LUMENS
– 200WSHP/3000 hours lamp life 5.95 lbs. (2.7kg.)
– Security Locking w/ PIN Code
– One Year parts & Service Warranty

Hereunder is the schedule of BAC activities:

Advertisement	November 28 – December 5, 2007
Issuance of Bid Documents	December 5 – 10, 2007
Pre-bid Conference	December 13, 2007 at 3:00 p.m.
Opening of Bids	December 21, 2007 at 10:00 a.m.

Bid Documents shall be available from the Supply Office upon presentation of a Letter of Intent and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of Two Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (Php 2,500.00) only to the Cashier's Office.

The DepED Region IV-A reserves the right to accept or reject any bid and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder/s.

(Sgd.) ROSE MARIE FELICIDAD V. SAET
Director III
BAC Chairman

(PDI – December 1, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
Regional Office No. IV-A
3rd Flr., Andenson Bldg., II, Brgy. Parian, Calamba City
December 01, 2007

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s.

	Name and Address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National/Citizenship	Position
1.	PANASONIC MANUFACTURING PHILIPPINES CORPORATION Ortigas Avenue Extension, Taytay, Rizal	Mr. Minoru Fujikawa/ Japanese	Division Head in Aircon Department
2.	PANASONIC MANUFACTURING PHILIPPINES CORPORATION Ortigas Avenue Extension, Taytay, Rizal	Ms. Meri Watanabe/ Japanese	Aircon Division Advisor/ External Communications Central Coordinator
3.	SUMINAC PHILIPPINES, INC. FCIE, Brgy. Langkaan, Dasmariñas, Cavite	Mr. Yoshihiro Kimura/ Japanese	Design Engineering Manager
4.	KAY LEE FASHION, INC. Bo. Bagong Pook, Lipa City	Mr. Yue Zhang/ Chinese	Pattern Designing Technician
5.	KAY LEE FASHION, INC. Bo. Bagong Pook, Lipa City	Mr. Wonkil Kang/ Korean	Pattern Development Manager
6.	CONTINENTAL TEMIC ELECTRONICS (PHILIPPINES), INC. LISP II, Brgy. La Mesa, Calamba City	Mr. Glenn Thomas Everett/ American	Manager - Transmission

If you have any information/objection to the above-mentioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

ATTY. RICARDO S. MARTINEZ, SR., CESO III
Regional Director

(PDI–December 1, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM
East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. Nos. (632) 920-6401 • (632) 920-6446
E-mail: member_relations@sss.gov.ph • Web site http://www.sss.gov.ph

NOTICE

Please get in touch with the Members Assistance Center, Social Security System (SSS), East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City or at any SSS office nearest your place of residence and file your death benefit claim within 90 days upon publication, if you are:

	NAME OF BENEFICIARIES	LAST KNOWN ADDRESS	NAME OF SSS MEMBER	DATE OF DEMISE
1)	Virginia B. Abello	Quezon City	Gonzalo Abello SS#03-3813353-9	November 19, 2006
2)	Arturo Ablanzar	Unknown	Elna R. Ablanzar SS#06-0849779-8	September 9, 2006
3)	Roger & Rhoden Bregildo	Brgy. Bayanan, Muntinlupa City	Eden Almagro SS#33-0137090-2	January 19, 2006
4)	Beverly Panares	Jamisola Extension, Pagadian City	Cipriano B. Baguio SS#10-0409240-8	September 20, 2004
5)	Amlolita B. Balontong	F-10 La Paz, Iloilo City	Romeo M. Balontong, Sr. SS#07-0142381-8	August 3, 2007
6)	Zenaida Herman	Unknown	Roberto B. Barrun SS#03-5853410-5	March 23, 2006
7)	Dopminador Bueno	Centro, Lallo, Cagayan	Natalie Bueno SS#33-5042790-3	July 9, 2007
8)	Consolacion Vicente	339 Prudencia St., Tondo, Manila	Felix Cabornay SS#03-3330901-2	March 20, 2007
9)	Bonifacio Camarinta Alfredo Sunico	Unknown	Jocelyn Humirang Camarinta SS#03-9123533-5	May 2, 2007
10)	Delfa Lamsin Jonathan Glenn, Grace Ann, Jun Francis, Maria Cecilia & Rhea Madonna	Unknown	Elpidio M. Carreon SS#03-2205719-7	September 7, 2007
11)	Teresita R. Dagohoy	Unknown	Ricardo M. Dagohoy SS#03-2328205-5	July 28, 2007
12)	Dalmacio G. Dizon	6145 Prk 6, Sta. Ines, Mabt., Pamp.	Gloria R. Dizon SS#03-6529396-3	August 21, 2007
13)	Caroline Elumba	307 Medicion 2-C, Imus, Cavite 4103	Leopoldo O. Elumba SS#03-7341285-9	September 17, 2007
14)	Gertrudes Francisco	Unknown	Wilfredo Francisco SS#03-1526255-9	July 21, 2007
15)	Milka/Melka/Melca	Ormoc City	Paulino Gablino, Sr. SS#06-0199271-1	September 6, 2007
16)	Vicenta M. Hinola	Unknown	Neptali L. Hinola SS#06-0836497-3	May 14, 2007
17)	Lydia Barangan Irma Reyes	Unknown	Jesus F. Javier SS#03-0835126-0	December 19, 2006
18)	Leonora Javier	452 Adel Rosario St. Cavite City 4100	Rodolfo B. Javier SS#02-0172342-9	August 20, 2007
19)	Allan Ledesma	Unknown	Rodelyn B. Ledesma SS#07-3042780-1	March 29, 2007
20)	Tomas Lim	Malitbog, So. Leyte	Elena Lim SS#09-0136257-5	February 8, 2005
21)	Imelda V. Marquez	Punta Cruz, Maribojoc, Bohol and/or Cagayan de Oro City	Jose Quezon D. Marquez SS#08-1240274-4	May 12, 2007
22)	Purita Makilang	Camp Cornello, Veruela, Agusan Norte	Arsenio D.Meyor SS#08-0115765-7	July 9, 2007
23)	Aida Militante	Unknown	Hernan Militante SS#03-3843409-2	January 18, 2007
24)	Roberto B. Reyes	116 Bonanza Phase II, Parang, Marikina	Aida C. Reyes SS#03-4092261-5	May 12, 2004
25)	Estrella T. Sarmiento Geralster T. Sarmiento	930 Tramo Ilaya, Las Pinas, MM	Geralberto C. Sarmiento SS#03-4688552-3	June 14, 2006
26)	Elenita T. Sarmiento Rhealyn T. Sarmiento Roaldy T. Sarmiento	Mender, Cavite	Rolly Sarmiento SS#03-0914405-2	June 21, 2007
27)	Isidra A. Simborios	Sta. Mesa, Manila	Alez Simborios SS#33-0873369-4	June 6, 2007
28)	Vercinilla Agpaoa	Pasuquin, Ilocos Norte	Arturo S. Valleza SS#03-1408123-6	March 15, 2007
29)	Manuel Villaluz, Sr.	Unknown	Manuel R. Villaluz, Jr. SS#33-8884043-9	May 25, 2007
30)	Vicente Yao	Guinobatan, Albay	Virgilio N. Yao SS#05-0408252-4	April 19, 2007

(PDI - December 1, 2007) – Nothing Follows –

Philippine Amusement & Gaming Corporation
A Global Corporation with a Global Mindset and a Filipino Heart

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
ITB NO.: 10-10-2007

The Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) is inviting all interested bidders in its forthcoming public bidding for the project stated hereunder:

Name of Project : Supply, Delivery and Installation of One (1) Lot Granite Stones for Slot Machine Expansion Area of PAGCOR Cebu
Approved Budget: Three Million Two Hundred Ninety Thousand Pesos (Php3,290,000.00)
Source of Fund : Internally Funded

Only suppliers duly registered with PAGCOR shall be allowed to participate in the bidding. Unregistered suppliers must register at the Suppliers Registration & Evaluation Section (SRES), Procurement & Property Department (PPD), 2nd Floor PAGCOR House, 1330 Roxas Blvd., Ermita, Manila, Tel. No. 526-0573.

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Pre-Bid Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	December 03, 2007 – December 19, 2007
2. Pre-Bid Conference	December 07, 2007 (2:30 pm)
3. Submission of Bids	December 20, 2007 (2:30 pm)
4. Opening of Bids	December 20, 2007 (2:30 pm onwards)

Complete details of the project are indicated in the **bid documents** which will be available to prospective bidders at the BAC Secretariat Unit, 2nd Floor, 1330 PAGCOR House, Roxas Boulevard, Ermita, Manila upon payment of a non-refundable bidding fee of ***One Thousand Six Hundred Forty Five Pesos (Php 1,645.00)***. In order to secure the documents, bidders should present the Official Receipt issued by our Cashier to the BAC Secretariat.

PAGCOR assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

PAGCOR reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

Please address all communications to the BAC Secretariat Unit, 2nd Floor, 1330 PAGCOR House, Roxas Boulevard, Ermita, Manila, Tel No.: 524-3911 / 521-1542 local 223/571.

(Sgd.) **RENE C. FIGUEROA**
Chairperson, BAC 1

(PDI–Dec. 1, 2007)

Philippine Amusement & Gaming Corporation
A Global Corporation with a Global Mindset and a Filipino Heart

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
ITB NO.: 11-13-2007 ACF
(Re-Bidding)

The Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) is inviting all interested bidders in its forthcoming public bidding for the project stated hereunder:

Name of Project : Supply and Delivery of Two (2) Units Brand New 11-Seater Van for PAGCOR Parañaque
Technical Specifications : Two (2) Units 11-Seater Van: Direct Injection Common Rail (D-4D), 2.5L, 4-cylinder, DOHC, 16-valve Turbo Diesel engine, Step 2 emission standard; Manual, 5-speed transmission, 102 Hp @ 3,600 rpm maximum power output; 260 Nm @ 1600-2400 rpm maximum torque; Rack & pinion wit power-assist steering system, 70L tank capacity; Dual airbags, ABS (Anti-lock Breaking System), side impact beams; Multi-reflector halogen headlamp with integrated clearance;11-Seater on new seat material pattern; New Clean Air Filter; 2-DIN CD/Tuner/MP3 with 4 Speakers and remote control; all power features (windows, door locks, side view mirror); Color: Two Tone
Approved Budget : Three Million Pesos (Php3,000,000.00)
Source of Fund : Internally Funded
Place of Delivery : PAGCOR Parañaque

Only suppliers duly registered with PAGCOR shall be allowed to participate in the bidding. Unregistered suppliers must register at the Suppliers Registration & Evaluation Section (SRES), Procurement & Property Department (PPD), 2nd Floor PAGCOR House, 1330 Roxas Blvd., Ermita, Manila, Tel. No. 526-0573.

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/ Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Pre-Bid Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	December 03, 2007 – December 19, 2007
2. Pre-Bid Conference	December 07, 2007 (2:00 pm)
3. Submission of Bids	December 20, 2007 (2:00 pm)
4. Opening of Bids	December 20, 2007 (2:00 pm onwards)

Venue: PAGCOR Parañaque

Complete details of the project are indicated in the **bid documents** which will be available to prospective bidders at the BBAC Secretariat, Branch Procurement and Property Office, PAGCOR-Parañaque upon payment of a non-refundable bidding fee of ***One Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (Php1,500.00)***. In order to secure the documents, bidders should present the Official Receipt issued by our Cashier to the BAC Secretariat.

PAGCOR assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

PAGCOR reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

Please address all communications to the BBAC Secretariat, Branch Procurement and Property Office, PAGCOR-Parañaque, Tel No.: 854-1557.

(Sgd.) **VALERIO R. SANTOS**
Chairperson, BBAC-PAGCOR Parañaque

(PDI - Dec. 1, 2007)

The Ateneo de Manila High School
Class of 1956

Greatly regrets to announce the demise of its beloved classmate

Gerardo (Toti) Verder

Toti departed this life to join his Creator on November 27, 2007.

He leaves behind his beloved wife, **Mely**, children, **Aileen** and **Andy**, **Bombitte** and **Luan**, daughters **Myra** and **Lyca**, and granddaughter, **Alec**.

The Funeral Mass will be celebrated on Sunday, December 2, 2007 at 8:00 a.m., at Funeraria Paz in Sucat. Thereafter, interment will take place at Loyola Memorial Park in Marikina after a military ceremony at noon.

Toti was one of three class members who served with distinction in our military. After our high school graduation, he entered the Philippine Military Academy. He served in our Air Force and was known as one of the finest helicopter pilots. He resigned from the service after reaching the rank of Major. Taps has now sounded for our first soldier classmate.

In Loving Memory of
Our Dearly Beloved

KARLOS MOSES "KAMOS" S. SALVACION

(December 01, 2004)

On his 3rd Death Anniversary

Holy Mass will be offered on December 01, 2007, Saturday, at the following churches:

St. Joseph Parish *Gagalangin, Tondo, Manila*	6:30 a.m.
San Lorenzo Ruiz Church *Binondo, Manila*	6:00 a.m.
Sta. Cruz Parish *Sta. Cruz, Manila*	8:00 a.m.
Quiapo Church *Quiapo, Manila*	6:00 a.m.
Manila Cathedral *Intramuros, Manila*	7:00 a.m.
San Agustin Church *Intramuros, Manila*	6:30 a.m.
St. Anthony Cathedral *Masbate City*	6:15 a.m.
Malate Catholic Church *Malate, Manila*	6:00 a.m.
St. Pancratius Parish *Grace Park, Caloocan City*	6:00 a.m.
San Roque De Manila Parish *Blumentritt, Manila*	6:00 a.m.

We, his family, sincerely thank our relatives, friends for kindly remembering him in prayers.

We, the family of the late

BIENVENIDO "RENE" R. GOMEZ

Fondly remember him on the **9th Year** since he joined Our Heavenly Father

Holy Masses will be offered tomorrow, Sunday, 02 December 2007 at the following Churches:

• **Saint Francis of Assisi Church** *Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong City*	6:00 a.m.
• **Christ the King Church** *Green Meadows, Quezon City*	6:00 a.m.
• **Parish of Our Lady of Light**	6:00 a.m.
• **Santuario de San Jose Church** *Greenhills, San Juan*	6:15 a.m.
• **Santuario de San Antonio Church** *Forbes Park, Makati City*	6:15 a.m.
• **San Agustin Church** *Palatiw, Pasig City*	6:00 p.m.
• **Sta. Rosa de Lima Church** *Bagong Ilog, Pasig City*	6:00 p.m.
• **Holy Family Church** *Bo. Capitolyo, Pasig City*	6:00 p.m.
• **St. John the Baptist Church** *Taytay, Rizal*	6:00 p.m.
• **Immaculate Concepcion Church** *Pasig City*	12:00 noon 6:30 p.m.
• **Sta. Clara de Monte Falcon Church** *Caniogan, Pasig City*	7:00 p.m.
• **Virgin of Good Voyage Church** *Antipolo, Rizal*	6:00 p.m.

"The Lord will open to them the gate of paradise, and they will return to the homeland where there is no death, but only lasting joy."

"I am the resurrection and life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies; and whoever believes in Me will never die."
John 11:25-26

Be at rest once more, O my soul, for the Lord has been good to me. Psalm 116:7

MARY "AYA" R. SIERRA

October 22, 1918 – November 30, 2007
Peacefully joined our Lord at the age of 89.

She shall be missed by her dearest surviving sister, **Luz**; **Lydia** (†) and brother, **Santiago** (†); nephews, nieces, grandchildren and relatives.

Her remains lie in state at Chapel Venice, Loyola Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City. Interment will take place on Sunday, December 2, 2007 at the Manila North Cemetery after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

Always caring...
INQUIRER OBITUARIES

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
- Copy of Death Certificate
- Any identification document (I.D.)

CLASSIFIEDS

Municipal Government of Quezon, Bukidnon
Project Reference No. : S-2007-18
Name of Project: Procurement of Various Goods
Location of the Project: LGU Quezon

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Bukidnon
MUNICIPALITY OF QUEZON
Tel. No. 088-355-1372 • Facsimile number 088-355-1323
Website: http://elgu.ncc.gov.ph/ecommunity/quezon-buk

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
Public Bidding 2007-18

The Local Government of Quezon, Bukidnon, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites manufacturers/suppliers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder contract:

Name of Project : Procurement of Various Goods
Location : LGU-Quezon, Bukidnon
Brief Description : Bidding by Lot described hereunder, to wit.

Item/Description	Approved Budget	Date/Time Pre-Bid Conference	Date/Time Deadline/ Opening of Bids	Non-Refundable Fee
Lot # 01 (PR # 1828) Meat Van Refrigerated (Recon)	400,000.00	December 14, 2007 1:30 P.M.	December 27, 2007 1:30 P.M.	200.00
Lot # 02 (PR # 1829) Ambulance	750,000.00			250.00
Lot # 03 (PR # 1829-A) Rescue Vehicle	750,000.00			250.00
Lot # 04 (PR # 1829-B) Patrol Vehicle	750,000.00			250.00
Lot # 05 (PR#1829-C) Rescue Apparatuses and Equipments	317,000.00			200.00

The Bid Documents shall be available at the Bids and Awards Committee starting December 6, 2007 upon payment of a non-refundable amount indicated above.

The Pre-Bid Conference shall be held at Municipal Conference Room, 2nd Floor Municipal Hall Building, Poblacion, Quezon, Bukidnon.

Please address your queries to the Head-Secretariat with Cell # 09289745659 and Telefax number 088-355-1372. Contact person Annabelle E. Abaquita, BAC Secretary, website: http://elgu.ncc.gov.ph/ecommunity/quezon-buk.

The Municipal Government of Quezon, Bukidnon reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process and to reject all Eligibility Documents, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders and assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in preparation of the bid.

Approved by:
(Sgd.) WILFREDO G. TOLEDO
BAC Chairman

(PDI–Dec. 1, 2007)

Municipality of Motiong, Samar
Construction of Flat Slab Bridges

Bidding Documents
Invitation for Bids

INVITATION FOR BIDS

Date : November 30, 2007
ADB Loan No. : 1772-PHI
Contract No. : SP-08-015-02

1. The Republic of the Philippines has received a loan from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) towards the cost of the INFRASTRUCTURE FOR RURAL PRODUCTIVITY ENHANCEMENT SECTOR (InfRES) PROJECT and it is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments under the Contract for the **Construction of 31.0m Bonga and 45.0m Nagbak Flat Slab Bridges**. Bidding is open to all bidders from eligible source countries of the Asian Development Bank that:
   (a) are registered with the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board to undertake infrastructure projects as a Medium A contractor or better, and
   (b) have undertaken within the past 5 years, as the contractor, management contractor or subcontractor, three (3) bridge construction work projects valued at least Pesos 5,500,000 each.
2. The Municipality of Motiong, Samar invites sealed bids from bidders with the above qualifications for the construction and completion of the Works, which includes two (2) Flat Slab Bridges (31.0 meters Bonga Flat Slab Bridge and 45.0 meters Nagbak Flat Slab Bridge) totaling 76.0 meters. The maximum contract period for the works is 180 calendar days.
3. Bidders may obtain further information from, and inspect and acquire the bidding documents, at the office of the Employer, at
   ACILA G. BACO
   Office of the BAC Chairman
   Municipality of Motiong, Province of Samar
4. A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by interested eligible bidders on submission of a written application to the above office, and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Four Thousand Pesos (Php 4,000.00). Issuance of bid documents will be on December 14, 2007 to January 12, 2008.
5. All Bids must be accompanied by a Security of equivalent to two (2) percent of the Bid Amount or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency, and must be delivered to the address indicated above on or before 2:00 p.m. on January 22, 2008. Bids will be opened at 2:00 p.m. on the aforementioned date, in the presence of bidders' representatives who choose to attend. A pre-bid conference will be on January 8, 2008 at 2:00 p.m., Session Hall, Municipal Building, Motiong, Samar.
6. The LGU reserves the right to accept or reject any bids and to cancel the bidding process at any time prior to award of the contractor, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders or any obligations to inform the affected bidders of the reasons for Employer's action.

(Sgd.) **ACILA G. BACO**
BAC Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - Dec. 1, 2007)

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

This is to inform the public that the following employees are no longer connected with Net Ship Management Inc.:

Milagros Macalisang
Jenette O. Pecayo
Michael Andrew O. Tapia
Jean Pierre T. Villaflor

Any transaction entered by them in behalf of the company shall not be honored.

This is as per POEA requirement.

NET SHIP MANAGEMENT, INC.

(PDI–Dec. 1, 2007)

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AN ARCHITECTURAL COMPANY IS SEEKING FOR:

(5) **SENIOR ARCHITECTS**
- PROFICIENT IN AUTOCADD AND DETAILED DESIGN DRAWINGS.
- MINIMUM 15 YEARS EXPERIENCE.

(8) **JUNIOR ARCHITECTS**
- PROFICIENT IN AUTOCADD.
- EXPERIENCED IN WORKING DRAWINGS.
- MINIMUM 5 YEARS EXPERIENCE.

(3) **3D VISUALIZERS**
- ARCHITECT, EXPERIENCED IN ANIMATION AND STILL IMAGE RENDERINGS.
- PROFICIENT IN AUTOCADD, 3DSMAX, SKETCH UP, VIZ, FLASH, PHOTOSHOP.
- KNOWLEDGE IN OTHER 3D MODELLING ND RENDERING SOFTWARE IS AN ADVANTAGE. MINIMUM 5 YRS. EXPERIENCE

(5) **QUANTITY SURVEYORS**
- CIVIL ENGINEERS
- EXPERIENCED ON HORIZONTAL AND VERTICAL STRUCTURES.
- PROFICIENT IN AUTOCADD AND OTHER RELATED SOFTWARES.
- MINIMUM 15 YEARS EXPERIENCE.

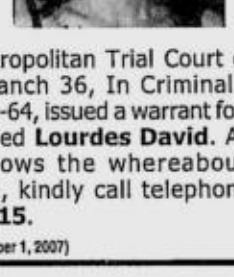
(2) **MASTER PLANNERS**
- ARCHITECTS
- PROFICIENT IN AUTOCADD.
- MINIMUM 15 YEARS EXPERIENCE.

(2) **SENIOR PROJECT MANAGERS**
- CIVIL ENGINEERS
- EXPERIENCED ON HORIZONTAL AND VERTICAL STRUCTURES. PROFICIENT IN PRIMAVERA, AUTOCADD AND OTHER RELATED SOFTWARES.
- MINIMUM 15 YEARS EXPERIENCE.

(2) **EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**
- WITH ARCHITECTURAL BACKGROUND
- MINIMUM 5 YEARS EXPERIENCE.

SEND YOUR CURRICULUM VITAE TO:
jabalarc@yahoo.com

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC



The Metropolitan Trial Court of Quezon City, Branch 36, In Criminal Case No. 0144260-64, issued a warrant for the arrest of accused **Lourdes David**. Any person who knows the whereabouts of the accused, kindly call telephone number **421-9415**.

(PDI – December 1, 2007)

IMMEDIATELY HIRING
LICENSED OPTOMETRISTS
with or without experience
Contact : MEL
Tel. Nos.: 660-4688 / 658-2309
Cel. No. 0926-7174315

FOR IMMEDIATE HIRING
BOOKKEEPER
Male/female; Below 30 years old; Preferably single; B.S. Accountancy graduate with at least 2 years experience in the profession; Can prepare and analyze financial statements; Must be computer-literate.
FIRST PENTA MANAGEMENT & CONSULTANCY
5F Perlas Bldg., 646 Quezon Ave. (between G. Araneta Boulevard and Santo Domingo Church), Quezon City.

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WE ARE A FAST-GROWING CALL CENTER COMPANY & WE URGENTLY NEED PERSONNEL FOR OUR ORTIGAS BRANCH:
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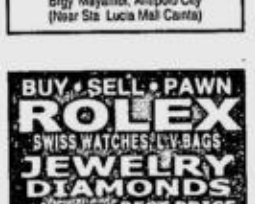
(5) CALL AGENTS
For interested parties, please submit resume & apply in person from 9am onwards at
#3 Missouri St., Golden Meadows, Brgy Mayamot, Antipolo City
(Near Sta. Lucia Mall Cainta)



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Philippine Mortuary Association
Christmas Party!
at The Heritage Park Fort Bonifacio
Monday, December 3, 2007
@ 4:30 PM
More Raffle Prizes for funeral homes
Come and Join Us...
For details/reservation contact PMA Secretariat
Manila: (02) 892-6061 local 717 (Look For CHRIS)
Cebu: (032) 231-7542 local 19 (Look For HONEY)
: 0927-4676283
Email: pmasecretariat@yahoo.com.ph

More Classified Ads

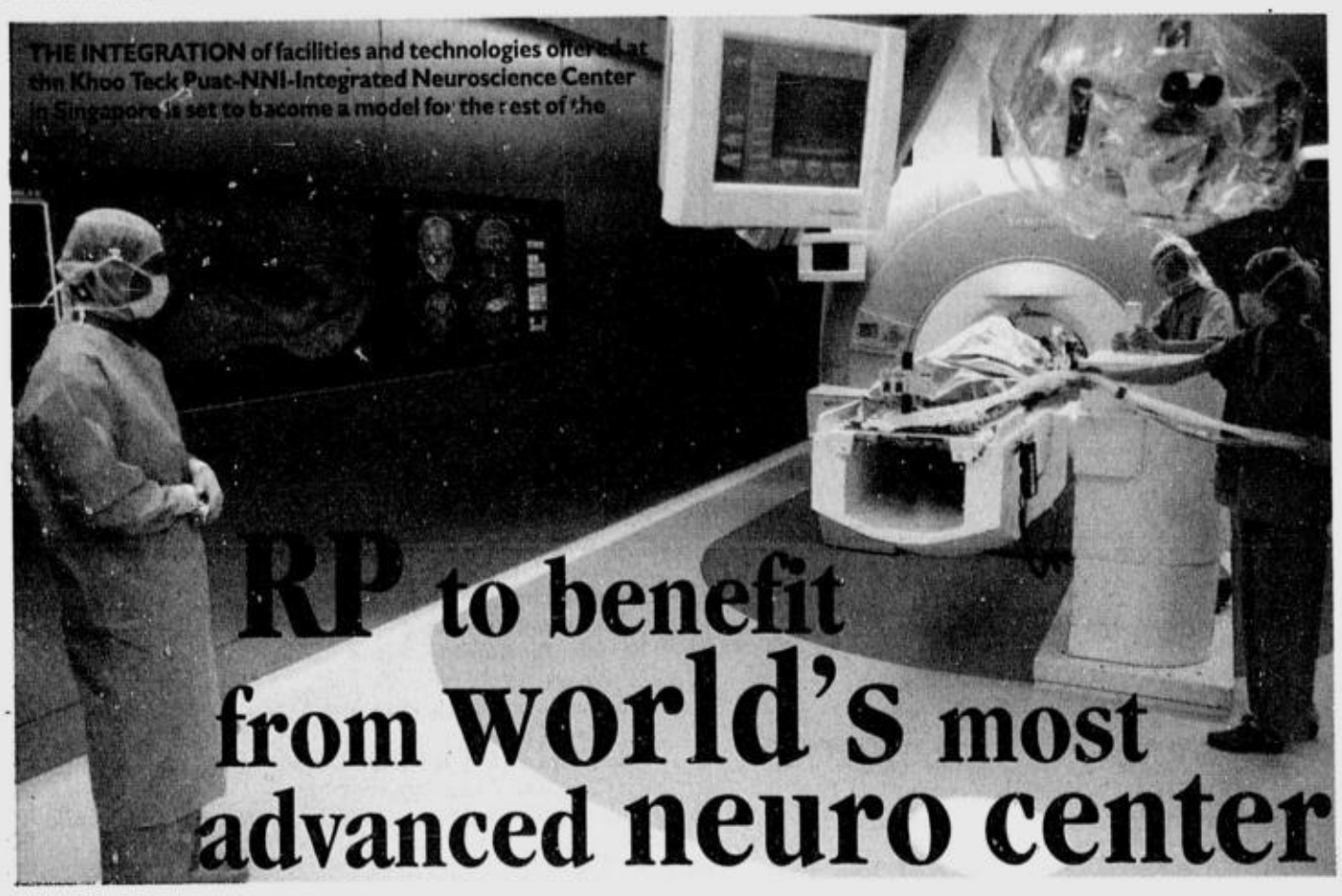
DECS-Region IV-A Payroll Line Printer ... B3
DECS-Region IV-A Personal Computers .. B4
DOLE-Region IV B4
PAGCOR-ITB No. 10-10-2007 ..... B4
PAGCOR- ITB No. 11-13-2007 ACF B4
Social Security System B4

E-mail: pr_science_health@inquirer.com.ph

SCIENCE/HEALTH

Editor Cesar D. Mangawang

Text us your feedback: inquirer hea name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)



THE INTEGRATION of facilities and technologies offered at the Khoo Teck Puat-NNI-Integrated Neuroscience Center in Singapore is set to become a model for the rest of the

RP to benefit from world's most advanced neuro center

Text and photos by Charles E. Buban

FILIPINO PATIENTS REquiring complex and delicate neurosurgical treatments—like removing a tumor in critical or hard to reach part of the brain—may be glad to know they only have to take a three-hour flight to Singapore to get the best treatment possible.

Singapore General Hospital recently opened its Khoo Teck Puat-National Neuroscience Institute-Integrated Neuroscience Center, now regarded as the world's most advanced neurosurgical center.

How advanced?

"For the first time, a comprehensive range of the latest technologies in neurosurgery is available in one location, digitally integrated to provide doctors with immediate and most accurate information of their patient's neurological condition and enable them to seamlessly combine multiple treatments," described Prof. Tan Ser Kiat, chief executive officer of both SGH and SingHealth, Singapore's largest healthcare group.

He announced that not only Singaporeans but also patients from abroad will be able to benefit from Khoo Teck Puat-NNI-Neuroscience Center.

Change paradigm

"The center should be a model for the rest of the world and promises to change the paradigm of how neurosurgeons work," said Dr. Ivan Ng, who heads the neurosurgery department at the NNI, the leading regional specialist center for cutting-edge treatment, education and research in the neurosciences (studies concerning the brain and nervous system).

Offering a glimpse of how hospitals of the future will feel and look like, doctors at the center showed this writer how they could carry out magnetic resonance imaging or computed tomography scans during an operation, when previously, separate sessions had to be scheduled.

THE ABILITY to get real-time information and be able to share it to all concerned is probably the best weapon any doctor could have.

Doctors also showed how they could be able to call up previous brain scans of the patient for comparison during surgery, leading to more accurate results.

"This will not only enable doctors to enjoy as close to real-time imaging as possible but also allow them to make the best plan or conceptualize the best strategy for their patient's condition. In the end, this will help shorten the time or lessen the cost needed for brain and spinal surgeries," Tan announced.

Linked to any hospital

In the future, Tan said the center could be digitally linked to hospitals or medical centers in the world—including those in the Philippines—for information sharing.

According to BrainLAB CEO Stefan Vilsmeier, the Khoo Teck Puat-NNI-Integrated Neuroscience Center becomes the first to try the software company's patented "Intelligent Treatment Framework" that integrates individual BrainLAB technologies in a unique framework.

In the Khoo Teck Puat-NNI-Neuroscience Center, BrainLAB set up five digitally integrated operating rooms and one Novalis, an advanced treatment device that uses beams that are shaped to match the exact contour of the tumor or lesion, effectively destroying them through radiation while reducing damage to surrounding healthy tissue.

"BrainLAB aims to complement the clinical skills of hospitals with the best technology available so that there is consistent improvement to health care. We are pleased to work with SingHealth and its institutions, NNI

RP/B7

The funniest joke in the world

EUREKA!

Queena N. Lee-Chua

DID YOU HEAR THE JOKE ABOUT the man who was proud when he completed a jigsaw within 30 minutes? After all, it said "five to six years" on the box.

Self-made man: Where are you from?

Harvard graduate: I come from a place where we do no end our sentences with prepositions.

Self-made man: Okay, where are you from, jack---?

Why does these jokes make us laugh (or at least smile)? In his best-selling book "Quirkology," multi-awarded British behavioral psychologist Richard Wiseman says that, many jokes have one thing in common—they make us feel superior. This arises because the person in the joke (like the man with the jigsaw) or a pompous figure (like the Harvard graduate) looks foolish, which by the way, is one reason politicians are often the butt of jokes.

The Greek philosopher Plato believed that the origin of humor lay in primitive laughter like "the roar of triumph in an ancient jungle duel." In the Middle Ages, dwarves and jesters made their living poking fun at unfortunate people (though it might be dangerous to do so to an ill-tempered monarch). Today the superiority theory is also used to joke about groups of people, such as Americans laughing at the Polish, and everyone laughing at blondes.

Battle of the sexes

In 2001, Wiseman and his team conducted a study to discover the scientific basis for laughter. They solicited thousands of jokes from the public, and asked people to rate how funny the jokes were. The superiority theory arose time and again, as in the battle of the sexes, where more women than men found jokes putting down men funny, such as the following:

A husband stepped on a scale that tells fortune and weight. "Listen to this," he told his wife, showing her the reading. "It says I'm energetic, bright, and a great person." "Yeah," his wife nodded, "and it has your weight wrong, too."

Not surprisingly, more men than women found jokes putting down women funnier. According to psychologist Sigmund Freud, all of us have sexual and aggressive thoughts, but society does not allow us to express these openly. So we bury them deep in our unconscious, where they emerge only through slips of the tongue, dreams, or jokes. Freud believed that jokes act as a release for the hidden anxiety we feel.

Thus, older people found jokes about getting older funny, such as the following:

A man in his late sixties suspects that his wife is going deaf, so he decides to test her hearing. He stands on the opposite side of the room from her and asks, "Can you hear me?" No answer. He moves halfway toward her and asks, "Can you hear me now?" No answer. He stands right beside her and asks, "Can you hear me now?" She replies, "For the third time, yes!"

I have to admit that I found this joke very funny, and so did my 9-year-old son. Wiseman would explain it by saying that both of us are probably older than our years.

Freud's theory of anxiety also accounts for why most of us like the next joke, since it helps us deal with fear of death:

The doctor tells the man he has good news and bad news. The bad news? The man has a rare and incurable disease. The good news? "Well," says the doctor, "we are going to name it after you."

Funniest joke does not exist

After doing statistical analyses, brain imaging scans, and interviews, Wiseman finally announced the world's funniest joke, which surprisingly, was a letdown for me. (It involved murder, and for the sake of child readers, I am not reprinting it here. Interested readers should get the book pronto!) Wiseman agrees, calling the winning joke "the world's blandest ... that makes everyone smile but very few laugh out loud."

After a yearlong search for the funniest joke, Wiseman says, "I don't believe it exists. People find different things funny, but there is no one joke that will make everyone guffaw. Our brains just don't work that way." What is important is that laughter has been shown to help us lead longer and happier lives.

"Quirkology: The Curious Science of Everyday Lives," by Richard Wiseman, is available at Powerbooks.

A Healthy Stomach Helps You Control Weight Gain

During the holidays, keeping healthy eating habits can be a big challenge. And, when weight gain is unmanaged, it increases the risk of developing various health problems like heart disease, stroke and diabetes.

Greet the New Year with good health. Take C-Lium Fibre everyday!

C-Lium Fibre is made from 100% natural psyllium husk, probably the best dietary fiber in the world. It adds volume to your meals without adding unnecessary calories to keep you feeling full longer.

Manage your weight this holiday season. Make C-Lium Fibre your daily habit!

Stroke prevention campaigns

By Rafael R. Castillo, MD

Conclusion

MEDICAL FILES

HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE HAS BEEN established as a major risk factor for stroke and the unfortunate thing about it is that most hypertensive patients have no symptoms.

The statistics are grim:

- Less than half of hypertensive patients are aware that they have high blood pressure.
- Only about a quarter are taking antihypertensive medications.
- Only about 10 percent, or even less, have adequately controlled high blood pressure.

Trivialize hypertension

What is quite tragic is that many hypertensive patients are aware that they have high blood pressure, but since they have no symptoms, they trivialize their hypertension. Sadly, many of these potential victims of the "silent killer" see no need and no strong motivation to take their medicines religiously to make sure that their blood pressures are controlled to optimal levels.

Not until they develop a serious stroke or a heart attack do they realize what their wanton disregard for their hypertension has cost them. And by then, it's too late already.

The effective strategy therefore is quite obvious. If we can only make the 90 percent with untreated or uncontrolled hypertension aware of the risk they are unduly exposed to, we can significantly reduce the incidence of stroke and other cardiovascular complications in our country.

Increase awareness

Hopefully, the I-Stroke campaign, spearheaded by Dr. Joey Navarro and Otsuka, and the "Marunong and Nagtatanong" information campaign collaborated in by the Philippine Heart Association, Stroke Society of the Philippines, Philippine Society of Hypertension and Therapharma, will significantly increase awareness on hypertension and stroke among Filipinos and stem the tide of what could produce a population with many disabled stroke victims.

According to the World Health Organization, 15 million people worldwide will suffer from stroke this year. Five million will die and another five million will be permanently disabled. In the Philippines, stroke affects 486 out of 100,000 Filipinos or roughly half a million Filipinos, according to Dr. Navarro in his study published in The Philippine Journal of Neurology. However, access to specialist care may be a problem.

At risk for stroke

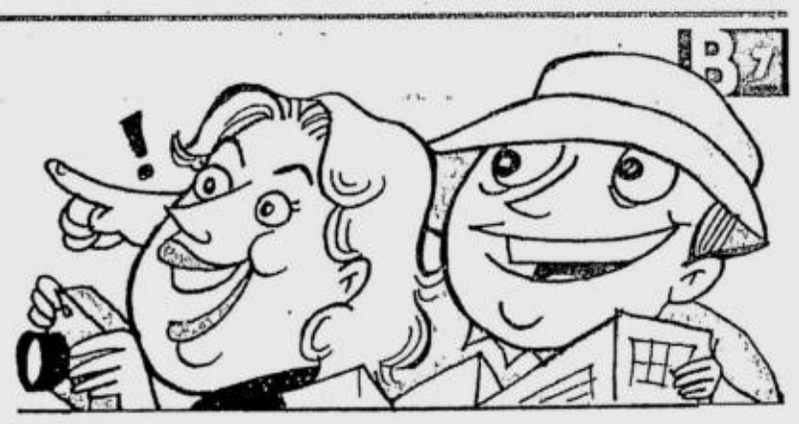
"There are less than 300 neurologists in the country or one for every 300,000 patients. This puts many Filipinos at risk for stroke and its life-threatening complications," explains Dr. Johnny Lokin, newly elected president of the Philippine Neurological Association.

Once an individual develops signs and symptoms of stroke or brain attack, he should not delay going to the hospital ER because time is of the essence to prevent more severe complications. The symptoms of stroke are sudden weakness of the facial muscles, arm or leg, usually on one side of the body.

One may also feel sudden numbness on one side of the body, confusion, difficulty in speaking or understanding speech, blurring of vision in one or both eyes, difficulty in walking, dizziness, loss of balance or a severe headache.

The PNA and SSP are encouraging the establishment of specialized acute stroke units in all tertiary hospitals to make sure that stroke patients are promptly and adequately treated with medications and interventions that can prevent more severe, irreversible damage to the brain.

Currently, there are about 16 of these acute stroke units nationwide. Hopefully, most medical centers will have such facility which will be a big boost in treating stroke patients and preventing its complications.



Weight-loss surgeons as 'tourist destinations'

By Tessa R. Salazar

LIPOSUCTION—A COSMETIC procedure wherein fats in the abdominal wall are removed—may have become so in demand in Western populations that are seeing a record number of overweight and obese citizens, tourists are sparing no expense to undergo such a procedure anywhere they can.

Philippine surgeons, noting the extent many liposuction clients would be willing to undergo just to shed off those unwanted flabs once and for all, have offered a better alternative: bariatric surgery. And hopefully, when clients see the results, they'll add Filipino weight-loss surgeons in their tourist "maps."

Bariatric surgery is now being trumpeted by proponents as the most effective treatment for morbid obesity. It involves surgically limiting the capacity of the gastrointestinal tract, primarily the stomach, to take in food and thus attain early satiety, induce malabsorption and delay gastric emptying time. All of these would result in the reduction of weight and intra-abdominal fats.

There have been 300 bariatric surgery procedures done in the Philippines for the past three years. This number of operations has spawned plans to make bariatric surgery in the country another "tourist destination."

Weight-loss surgery

Dr. Rey Melchor F. Santos, president of the Philippine College of Surgeons, said bariatric surgery has been a strong suit of trained local surgeons. Santos, who is also the president and CEO of the Philippine Obesity Control Surgery Team, revealed that this weight-loss surgery is one of the reasons his group is coordinating with the Department of Tourism.

Santos said the competition in medical tourism in the Asia-Pacific region has been steadily intensifying. Bariatric surgery, Santos stressed, would give the country an edge over, for instance, Thailand, which is more known for its cosmetic surgery industry.

Bariatric surgery also adds medical significance for patients in the long run, Santos said, as liposuction is not as effective a treatment for obesity in the long run as bariatric surgery is.

Big advantage

The cost of undergoing bariatric surgery here is also a big advantage. "Bariatric surgery cost, which is 50 percent less in the Philippines than in the United States, can be packaged with tours," Santos said.

Dr. Jose Antonio M. Salud, chief, minimally invasive surgery section of the Medical City, said there are less than 15 surgeons specializing in bariatric surgery, but five from the Philippine Obesity Control Surgery Team have done the most procedures in the Philippines.

He disclosed that there are two groups of bariatric surgeons in the country. The majority of operations are done by the group in St. Luke's Hospital in Quezon City, while another group operates in Cebu.

"Compared to other countries such as Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand, the Philippines seems to have shown good results," Santos observed.

Unlike "conventional" tourists who seek tropical climes only during winter, holidays, or work breaks, medical tourists are not seasonal visitors. Obesity, in particular, is not a seasonal disease, said Salud. Bariatric surgeons expect patients to come in year round.

The digital way to beat breast cancer

CAREPLUS

Angelo Palmones

MORE AND MORE WOMEN ARE BEING DIagnosed with breast cancer, and yet living long, productive lives. These women are diagnosed with breast cancer, undergo surgery, either with mastectomy or with lumpectomy (removal of the malignant tumor with retention of most breast tissue), undergo chemotherapy and/or radiotherapy, then live many years without any other evidences of disease sans a surgical scar.

These women literally beat cancer because of one major factor: early detection. When breast cancer is caught and treated before the cancer cells spread to any lymph node, almost all women survive beyond 5 years. When caught after the cancer has spread to at most three lymph nodes, up to 92 percent of patients survive for 5 years or longer.

The mammogram has been pivotal in early breast cancer detection. The mammogram is a special X-ray image of the breast. It can detect small tumors even before they grow big enough to be felt by hand. The mammogram can also detect early and minute signs of breast cancer, such as microcalcifications (calcium deposits within breast tissue, with or without the presence of a mass).

Studies show that a well-conducted mammogram can reveal breast changes two years before a patient or a physician can feel a lump manually. Women over the age of 45 should get a mammogram yearly, as well as those women aged 25 and above who are especially at risk, e.g., those with a strong family history of breast cancer.

Clearer images with less radiation

Like most things in today's word, the film-based mammogram has made the digital turn. Operationally, digital mammography is very similar to conventional mammography, but most of the processes involved have been computerized and automized.

Digital mammography records the breast image digitally into a computer instead of on photographic film. The image is captured using a special electronic X-ray detector, which converts the image into a digital picture. The digital picture can then be viewed on a computer monitor.

The latest technology in digital mammography in the Philippines uses an amorphous selenium (a-Se) photoconductor-based full-field flat detector. This unit, housed at the St. Luke's Breast Center, also features a tungsten (W/Rh) X-ray tube. The machine automatically selects the best settings and the lowest dose according to individual breast characteristics.

"The digital technology fully automates almost all aspects of the mammography process. The system is so sensitive that less radiation is used. It automatically calculates the exact amount of radiation that is required so the quality of the breast image is optimized while avoiding unnecessary radiation overexposure," says Dr. Alejandro Dizon, head of the St. Luke's Breast Center. "The breasts receive up to 50 percent less radiation, and results in clearer images and improved resolution," Dr. Dizon emphasized.

St. Luke's Breast Center mammograms are interpreted by Dr. Barbara Helen Perez and Dr. Mercy Go-Santi. Both trained in breast mammography at Battlefield Imaging Center (Ringgold, Georgia), the best imaging center for 2007 as awarded by the American College of Radiology. They also trained in Austin, Texas and Seattle, Washington under Dr. Lazlo Tabar, a world-renowned Swedish mammography radiologist.

THE NEW St. Luke's digital mammography machine

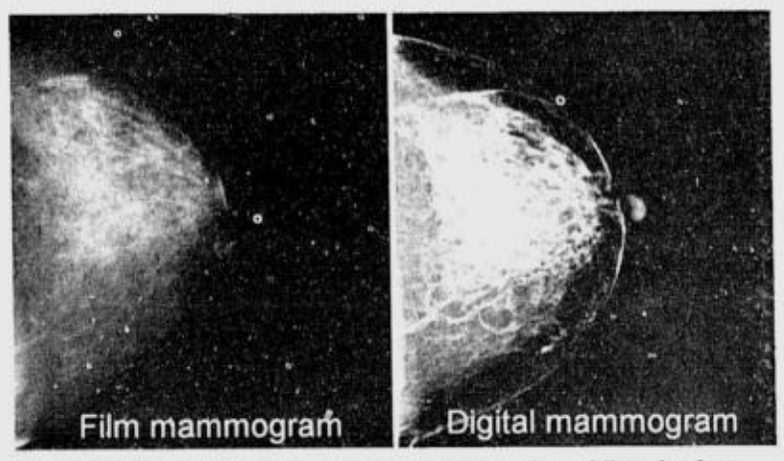
Optimal compression

Going digital also offers other advantages. New digital mammography machines feature a computerized compression system that prevents overcompression and unnecessary pain or discomfort during the procedure. The system compresses only as long as the breast is soft and pliable, and stops at the point of optimal compression.

Digital technology also improves and speeds up access to mammogram results. It allows automation of patient registration, integration with relevant examinations (such as breast ultrasound and breast MRI results), presetting of image parameters/image acquisition, image processing and image quality check.

Digital mammography can also be seamlessly integrated with a Picture Archiving and Communication Systems (PACS), if the medical center has this capability. PACS is a network that stores mammogram images and or other imaging modalities, such as X-ray, ultrasound, CT scan or MRI. They can then access these images from a remote computer, and can be simultaneously accessed by many doctors.

For feedback, please e-mail the Healthcare Technology and Outcomes Information Bureau at inquire@htoib.com.



DIGITAL mammography improves breast imaging while using less radiation.

ST. Luke's breast radiologist Dr. Mercy Go-Santi, who together with Dr. Barbara Helen Perez, trained in breast mammography at Battlefield Imaging Center (Ringgold, Georgia), the best imaging center for 2007

Big Organizations Wage War Against The "Silent Killer"

The fierce war against hypertension rages as Therapharma, a division of Unilab, partners with the Philippine Heart Association (PHA), Philippine Society of Hypertension (PSH), and Stroke Society of the Philippines (SSP) in generating public awareness against the serious consequences of not detecting high blood pressure early.

A memorandum of agreement (MOA) signifying the partnership, was signed between the presidents of the three medical societies namely: Dr. Efren Vicaldo of PHA, Dr. Ester Bitanga of SSP, and Dr. Rafael Castillo of PSH. Together with Therapharma's General Manager, John Dumpit, the MOA signing was held at Therapharma's office at the Bonaventure Plaza in Greenhills, San Juan last October 25, 2007.

With the tagline "Marunong ang nagtatanong", the trimedia campaign debunks myths on hypertension which cause delay in diagnosis and neglect in the treatment. It emphasizes that many patients with hypertension have no symptoms for many years, and many patients discover it too late. "A stroke or a heart attack may be the first manifestation of an elevated blood pressure," says Dr. Castillo.

Every year, thousands of Filipinos become victims of heart attack, stroke and other complications caused by hypertension. "It's really a life-threatening disease that requires prompt detection," Dr. Vicaldo stresses.

In line with the campaign, a television commercial was launched on November 7, 2007. The said TV commercial, which will be aired the whole month of November during primetime at ABS-CBN 2 and GMA 7 TV stations, features the presidents of PSH, PHA, and SSP as they give messages about hypertension awareness and the need to consult one's physician. Radio programs and newspaper print ads conveying the same messages will also be run simultaneously.

Hypertension or high blood pressure is known as a "silent killer" because majority of patients do not feel any symptom. "Since hypertension has no set symptoms, it is not easily detected," says Dr. Vicaldo. He adds though that determining the blood pressure will take only a few minutes, and one should make an effort to have his blood pressure checked.

Hypertension usually coexists with other medical problems such as diabetes, cholesterol problems and obesity. The presence of hypertensionand these other risk factors increases the cardiovascular risk five fold even in the absence of symptoms.

The good news though, according to the three specialists, is that hypertension can be controlled. "Coping with hypertension requires the right treatment, medicine and lifestyle change," says Dr. Vicaldo. He warns however that "home remedies from your friendly neighbor is not enough to manage hypertension."

"So don't take advice from just anyone. Go to a real doctor," the three society presidents chorus.

For more information, one may call the "Marunong ang nagtatanong" hotline: 1-800-10-6-HEALTH (432584).

KIDS QUIZ

By Emman Cena

Conquer your fears, kiddo!

DID YOU KNOW THAT INTERNATIONAL SUPERSTAR DAVID BECKHAM HAS A morbid fear of birds? Would you believe renowned film director Steven Spielberg is terrified of insects?

Each one of us has his or her own share of phobias toward animals, insects and even on anything worth the shiver. Hollywood film star, and once considered the sexiest man alive, Brad Pitt fears sharks.

Let us check your knowledge on the science of phobias. Match the phobia on the left with the thing being referred to on the right.

Phobia	Thing feared of
1. Achulophobia	a. Cancer
2. Acrophobia	b. Thunder
3. Agoraphobia	c. Slime
4. Algophobia	d. Needles
5. Anthrophobia	e. Lightning
6. Astraphobia	f. flowers
7. Belonephobia	g. Pain
8. Blennophobia	h. Open spaces
9. Brontophobia	i. Heights
10. Carcinophobia	j. Darkness

Score: 1-4 Good; 5-7 Very Good; 8-10 Excellent

Answers: 1-j, 2-i, 3-h, 4-g, 5-f, 6-e, 7-d, 8-c, 9-b, 10-a

RP to benefit . . .

From page B6

and SGH, in establishing this integrated neuroscience center, which will help them achieve a new level of integration and patient care that leverages on medical expertise and the most advanced digital technology for better clinical outcomes," Vilsmeier said.

Cutting-edge medical tech

Founded in 1989, BrainLAB specializes in the development, manufacture and marketing of cutting-edge medical technology for radiosurgery/radiotherapy, orthopedics, neurosurgery and ENT.

Among the products developed by BrainLAB are software and hardware components for image-guided surgery and radiotherapy, integrated systems for stereotactic radiosurgery, as well as fully integrated operating room solutions.

"A number of hospitals in the Philippines already have BrainLAB technologies and the fact that the world's most advanced facility is now in Singapore it will only be a matter of time before a similar hospital or center in the Philippines will follow the footsteps of SGH," he said.

The Khoo Teck Puat-NNI-Integrated Neuroscience Center was made possible through a S$13 million (P387 million) donation coming from the foundation of the late philanthropist Khoo Teck Puat.

BUSINESS

DA steps up war vs smuggling

Coordinated campaign seen to spur RP farm sector growth

By Amy R. Remo

AGRICULTURE SECRETARY ARHTUR C. YAP has directed five Department of Agriculture agencies to step up their campaign against the smuggling of meat, poultry and dairy products in the country.

The directive—which was issued last week to the Livestock Development Council, Bureau of Animal Industry, National Meat Inspection Services, Philippine Carabao Center and the National Dairy Authority—would ultimately spur growth of the country's farm sector, Yap said.

Current efforts to curb smuggling have already shown a drastic reduction in the smuggling of meat and meat products this year, according to records from the NMIS.

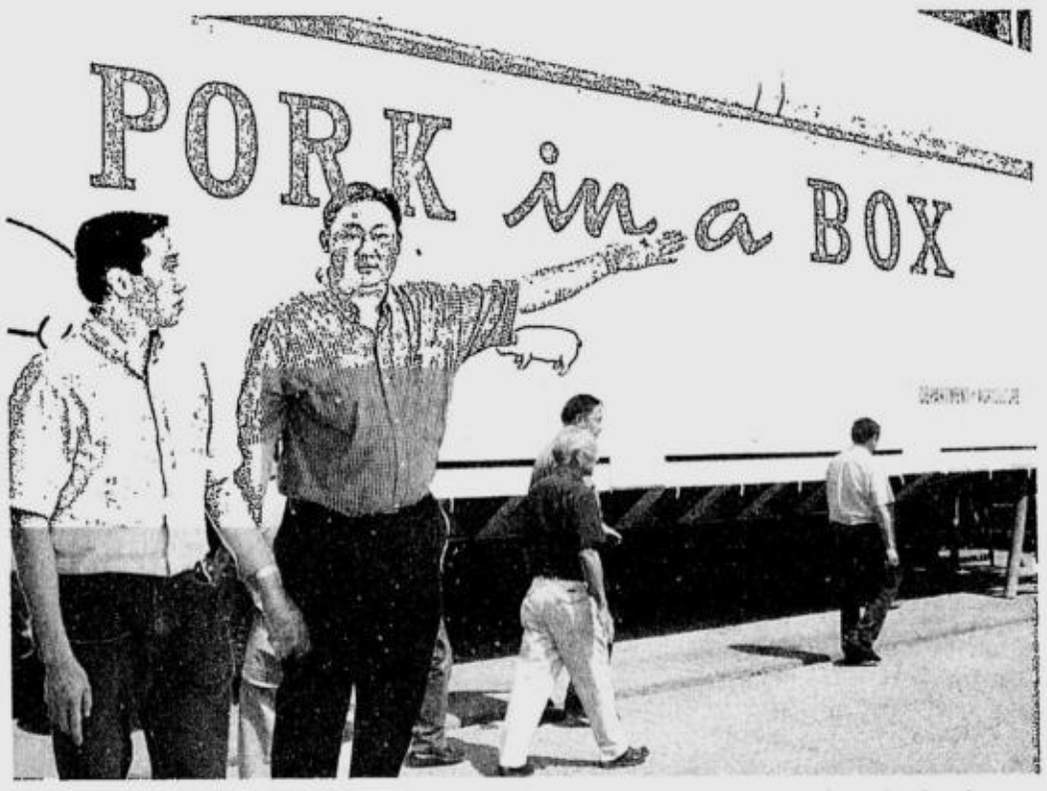
For instance, the volume of smuggled meat products seized has dropped significantly to 50.45 metric tons, so far this year, from 273.71 metric tons in 2006, as a result of coordinated efforts by the DA's regulatory agencies.

On the part of BAI, its Veterinary Quarantine Service has adopted stringent measures, such as full documentation, inspection and examination of all frozen meat and meat products referred to by the Bureau of Customs to prevent smuggling.

Also, the NMIS is working closely with the VQS and the livestock and poultry sectors for the strict monitoring of cold storages, meat processing plants, supermarkets and other meat outlets to detect the presence of smuggled products.

The LDC, on the other hand, has been assisting livestock associations in spreading awareness and information on how to curb smuggling of meat and meat products within their ranks.

"The agreement among the DA, Department of Finance and the BOC forged last December to strengthen collaborative efforts against the smuggling of agricultural products has proven to be key in curbing this illegal activity," Yap said.



AGRICULTURE Secretary Arthur C. Yap inspects a proposed processing plant site for the Pork In A Box project in Pontevedra, Capiz in Region 6. The region is considered to be the third top producer of hogs in the country. The project aims to improve the pork marketing system in the region and help backyard hog growers market their produce.

Producers Bank to get P120M from Landbank

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG Pilipinas has approved the Land Bank of the Philippines' P120-million investment in Producers Rural Banking Corp., one of the nation's largest countryside lender.

The private placement shall be made via an exclusive issuance by Producers Bank of a 10-year subordinated debt paper to Landbank. The placement will qualify as tier 2, or supplementary capital, to boost Producers Bank's capital adequacy ratio to about 25 percent from 19.47 percent as of end-October.

Landbank president Gilda Pico said the bank was keen on investing in well-run countryside lenders, which serve as the government bank's priority market.

In 2006, Producers Bank was a recipient of Landbank's "Hall of Fame" award for continuing to be an outstanding countryside finance institution.

Proceeds from the Landbank's private placement will be used to expand the rural bank's branch network. Producers Bank has 39 branches at present, but it has authority from the BSP to establish five more in Regions II (Cagayan Valley) and III (Central Luzon) before the year's end.

With a total of 44 branches operating by the end of the 2007, Producers Bank will have the largest branch network in Luzon and the second largest nationwide among the country's 737 rural and cooperative banks.

Recently, the bank secured approval from the BSP to operate a foreign currency deposit unit. This will allow the bank to engage in foreign exchange denominated transactions, such as accepting foreign currency deposits and granting of foreign currency loans.

As of end-October, Producers Bank's total assets amounted to P1.84 billion.

BIR, LGUs ordered to share information on taxpayers

By Michelle V. Remo

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO has directed the Bureau of Internal Revenue and treasuries of local government units to share taxpayers information with each other—a move aimed at better detecting tax cheats both in the national and local levels.

The President, upon the request of local treasurers, has issued Executive Order No. 646, ordering the BIR and local governments to provide each other data relevant to the conduct of tax audits.

Information that may be shared include gross income of taxpayers, volume of production of corporate entities, amount of receipts used and past tax payments made.

The Philippine Association of Local Treasurers and Assessors (Phaltra) earlier said that there are discrepancies in the taxpayers records handled by the BIR and LGUs. Some taxpayers accurately declare their income to LGUs, but underdeclare the same to the BIR. Some pay the right taxes to the BIR but miss out on complying with their local tax obligations, the group said.

Phaltra had long been requesting the BIR to share information on taxpayers in order to enhance their tax audit capabilities and increase revenue collection.

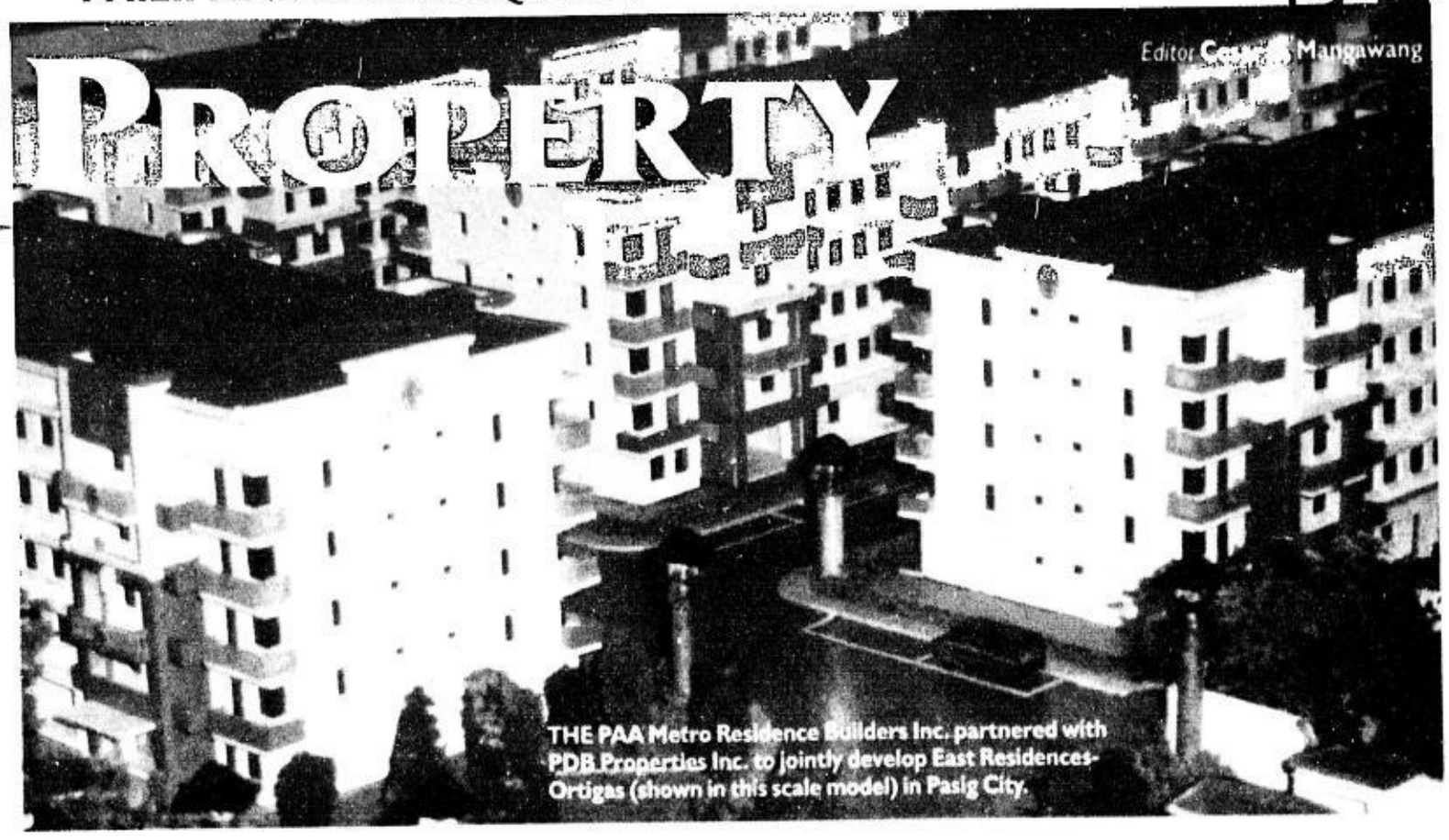
But the BIR was hesitant because it is prohibited by law to divulge such information.

Later, the BIR said that a presidential order would allow it to share taxpayers information with LGUs.

"The Bureau of Internal Revenue and the local government units can help each other in their collection efforts through accessibility of information ... on their respective taxpayers," the President said in the executive order.

PROPERTY

Editor [illegible] Mangawang



THE PAA Metro Residence Builders Inc. partnered with PDB Properties Inc. to jointly develop East Residences-Ortigas (shown in this scale model) in Pasig City.

Helping city dwellers get their ideal home

By Charles E. Buban

A SIZEABLE SEGMENT OF the workforce in most cities around the world live in the vicinity of their office address.

Interestingly, it's the other way around here in the Philippines where majority of the country's wage and salary earners reside several kilometers away from their place of work.

"There is nothing wrong here, except that a huge part of their income goes to travel expenses or in the maintenance of their transport vehicle, budget for fuel included," said Roy Calleja, Subdivision and Housing national president who is also president of a newly formed outfit, the PAA Metro Residence Builders Inc.

Productivity is also hampered as these people—potential homebuyers—are also affected by the increasing cost of transportation as well as the worsening traffic situation.

Attractive housing package

"Instead of letting them live with their relatives living within the area of their office, why not offer them attractive housing package that would reduce their commuting time and at the same time lessen their commuting costs?" he asked.

Since its establishment in March last year, PAAMRBI has envisioned itself to be the market leader in the affordable medium-rise condominium market in Metro Manila as well as in other metropolitan areas in the Philippines.

Because of the scarcity of space within these areas PAAMRBI believes that investing on vertical housing developments will prove attractive to a huge segment of the country's population who work in the cities.

Within Metro Manila

"What these people need are residential developments that are affordable and at the same time located within Metro Manila," Calleja said.

Calleja reported that based on a 2005 survey done in Metro Manila, there is a significant portion of the population whose annual income ranges from P300,000 to P1 million (a monthly income of P25,000 to P83,333) of which 30 percent have no own house and instead live with a relative.

"These group will initially be our target market," said Gary de Guzman, PAAMRBI strategic marketing services group manager.

The company's first move is the purchase of more than 200 foreclosed Home Development Mutual Fund units at Smile Citihomes in Novaliches, Quezon City, which they refurbished and later offered to homebuyers at prices ranging from P406,000 to P609,000.

The PAAMRBI is also targeting Quezon City, Muntinlupa City, Marikina City, Parañaque City and even Metro Cebu as sites for its next projects, all with prices below P1 million.

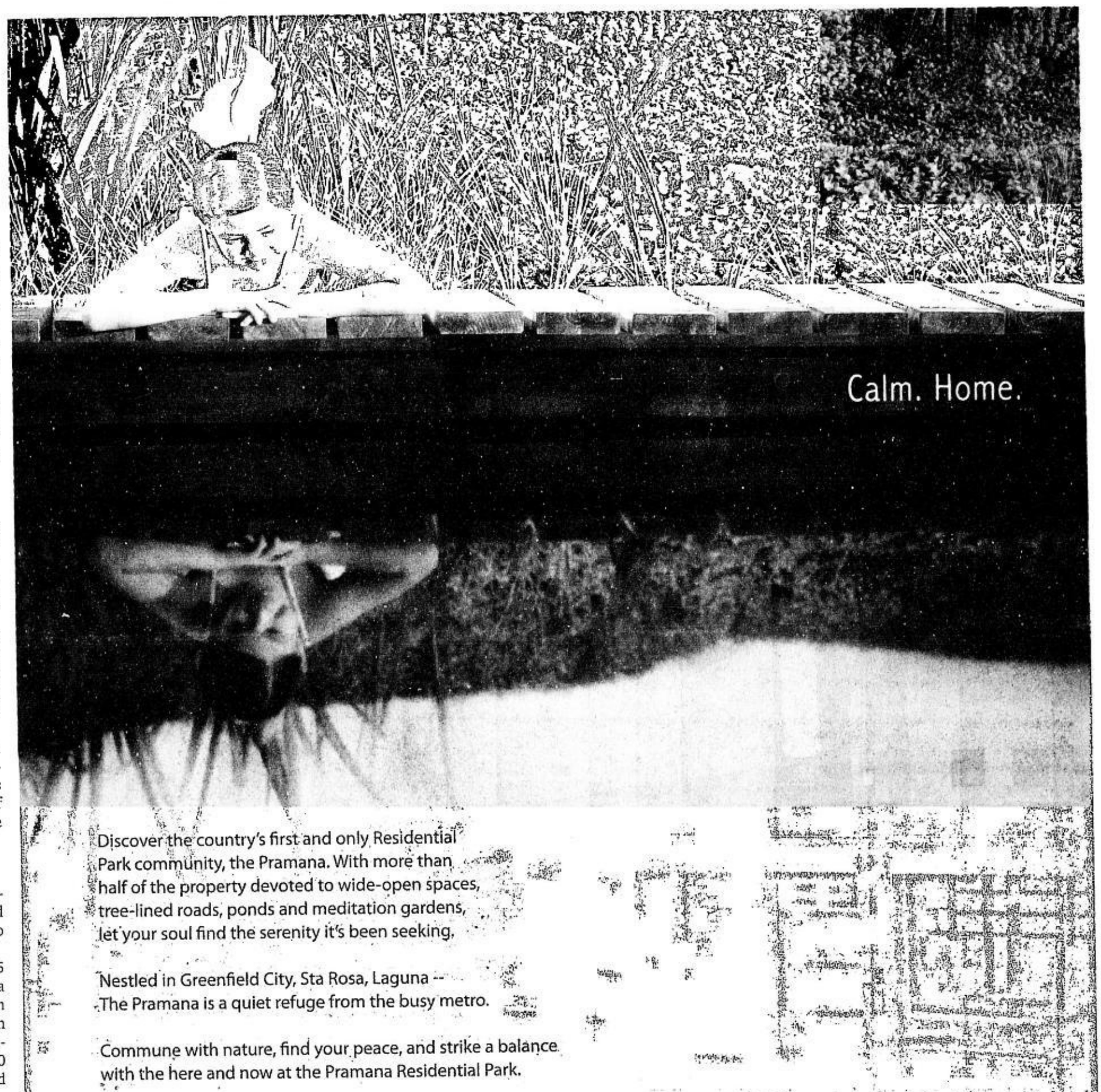
Partnership

Last week, PAAMRBI partnered with PDB Properties Inc. to jointly develop East Residences-Ortigas, a mid-rise condominium development in Ortigas avenue extension in Pasig City (near Ever Gotesco Mall).

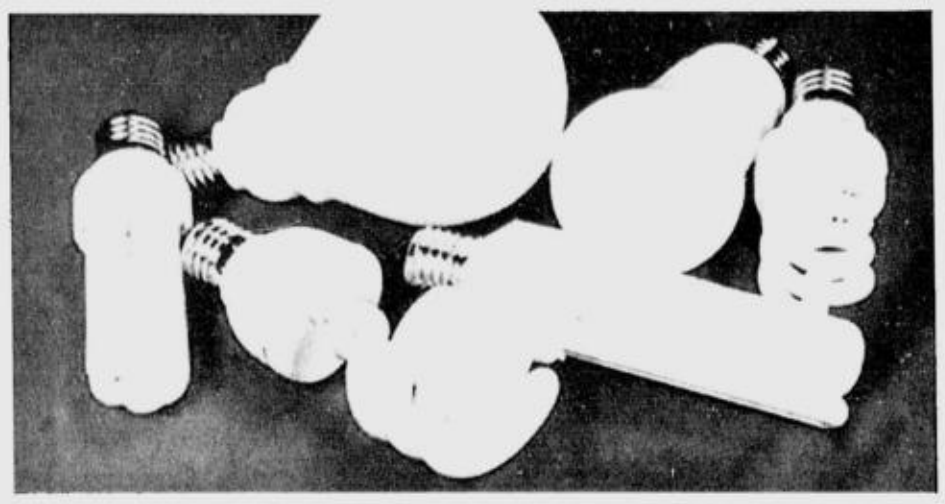
This 8,146-sq-m property will offer 435 units (having 30 sq.m floor area) with cost ranging from P730,500 to P940,500.

"This is a significant partnership for PAAMRBI as the company will be able to entice more members of the workforce, middle-income earners and even the families of overseas contract workers and retirees to invest in their own home," said PAAMRBI Chair Romarico Alvarez.

Together with Calleja, Alvarez signed up with PDBPI President and GM Epifanio Santillan Jr., EVP Tomas Tambunting and Supports Services Group Head Maria Angela Padilla.



The season of lights



COMPACT fluorescent lamps are three to four times more efficient than incandescent bulbs in terms of energy use. More of its electricity consumption is turned into useful light.

WWW.SMUD.ORG/REBATES/IMAGES-REBATES/CFL-LAMPS.JPG

GREEN ARCHITRENDS

Amado de Jesus

OUR LIGHTING COSTS WILL GO UP this Christmas season. This is partly because we shall be having longer nights and shorter day time. Another reason for the rise in the electricity bill is the accompanying festivity of the coming season of joy.

There is much more to our increased lighting costs in this season of lights. We also must take a hard look at the impact of our use of electric light on global warming and climate change. The more electricity we use, the more fossil fuel we need to burn in the power plants. Therefore more green house gases will be emitted.

This second cost we cannot afford to pay. We have fewer years than the fingers in one hand to slow down the rate of global warming. We all know that the culprit for global warming is carbon dioxide emissions.

Shift to efficient electric lights

The Department of Energy or DOE is sounding the bugle for a shift to efficient electric lights or EELs. The DOE is also beating the drums for high-intensity discharge (HID) lamps, ballasts and energy-efficient luminaires. We have mentioned before energy savings from compact fluorescent lamps or CFLs.

Through its agency the Philippine Efficient Lighting Market Transformation Project or PelmatP, the DOE aims to overcome the barriers to widespread use of efficient electric lighting systems. They are updating policies, standards and guidelines on lighting application. The Philippine National Standard was set up which includes the Minimum Energy Performance Standards on lighting products.

PelmatP is building stronger institutional and technical capacity for public and private sector involvement in efficient lighting use. The DOE Lighting Appliance Testing Laboratory has procured modern lighting.

Intense information, education and communication campaigns are being undertaken among lighting industry regulators, manufacturers, suppliers and consumers, etc. The use of EELs is brought down to public and private groups such as Gawad Kalinga, Chamber of Commerce and Industry and local government units.

PELMATP is developing EEL modules for inclusion in electrical engineering and vocational courses. The Board of Electrical Engineering and the Commission on Higher Education recently approved the inclusion of Illumination Design Engineering as a three-unit subject in Electrical Engineering in the country. Work is undertaken with the departments of Trade and Industry and Education to campaign for energy efficiency among high school students.

Pelmatp and the large distribution utility companies in the country are together in promoting the use of EELs. It is studying the use of efficient roadway lighting with the LGUs.

The "Palit Ilaw" program of the DOE is being conducted in some areas in Novaliches, Manila, Pasig, Quezon City and Cebu for a change from incandescent bulbs to CFLs, from fat linear fluorescent lamps to slim tube LFLs triphosphor coated, from conventional magnetic ballasts to low-loss electromagnetic and electronic ballasts, and the luminaires.

Why CFLs?

Compact fluorescent lamps are three to four times more efficient than incandescent bulbs in terms of energy use.

More of its electricity consumption is turned into useful light. While an incandescent bulb converts only 20 percent of electricity it uses to useful light because 80 percent is dissipated as heat, a CFL with equivalent light output converts 80 percent of the electricity it uses to useful light. CFLs also last four to eight times longer compared to incandescent bulbs.

Choosing lighting products

Consumers should look well at the label of lighting products. We have to look for the Philippine Standards (PS) mark for locally-made products, and the Import Commodity Clearance (ICC) mark for imported lighting products for legitimacy of the product in terms of compliance with government standards.

We also have to look for the yellow or energy label mentioning the energy performance characteristics of the lighting product, especially for CFLs and electro-magnetic ballasts. The yellow label bears the DOE and DTI labels, and is useful for comparing lighting products that suit our needs. It includes light output in lumens, power consumption in watts, efficacy in lumens/watt and average life in hours.

Lighting cost of an average building takes up 20 percent of electricity expense. It is higher in homes. It is said that if one in every 7.8 million households will switch to the use of CFLs from incandescent bulbs, the installation of a 116 MW power plant can be deferred each year. That is an annual savings of $200 million. If we hit the objective of the DOE at the end of the program, we expect to earn electricity savings of 2,704 GWh equivalent to a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions of 497 Gg CO_2.

For comments or inquiries, e-mail amadodejesus@gmail.com.

CROWNASIA'S RENOIR TOWER AT PRESIDIO

Stylish, condo living within your means

IN THE HEART OF THE METRO lies an oasis where one can wake up to magnificent lakeside views and still be 15 minutes away from the Makati Central Business District. CrownAsia, the country's pioneer developer of master-planned, themed enclaves with befitting style while remaining attainable for Filipino families, recently launched its latest addition to the thriving enclave of Presidio—the Renoir Tower.

The self-contained, residential and commercial hub of Presidio, situated inside Lakefront City Central in Sucat, is comprised of 16 towers interplaying in height and size to offer diverse living options that will suit the needs of Filipino families. The 6.8-hectare enclave of Presidio features an encompassing theme drawn from the distinct neo-Victorian architectural style of San Francisco.

Residence with quaint gardens

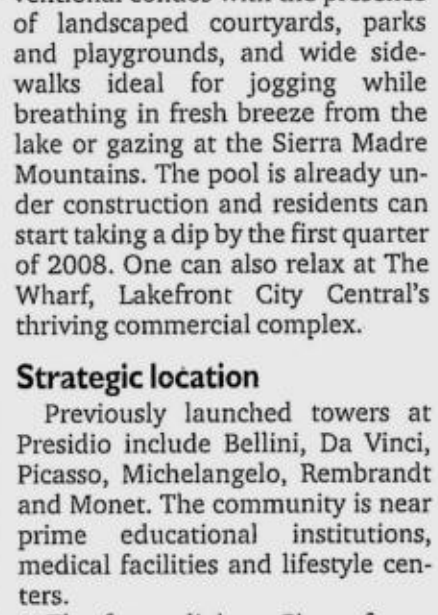
The 10-story Renoir garden condominium is already under full-blast construction and is set to be completed by the end of this year. The innovative architecture of Recio+Casas for the Y-shaped tower, together with its high windows and ceilings, is specifically intended to provide maximum natural ventilation and lighting. Among the three-wing towers of Presidio, the Renoir takes pride in having the most units with a 180° panoramic view of Laguna de Bay.

Renoir has over 150 units with a variety of space configurations such as studio units, one-bedroom homes ranging from 29 to 34 sq m, and two-bedroom units from 51 to 78 sq m. More luxurious penthouse units are available at the ninth and tenth floors. A rare feature for vertical residences is the existence of their own quaint gardens for selected ground floor units. More individuals may soon experience the convenience and practicality of living in Presidio since the monthly amortization is as low as P12,143.

The sales office located right inside Presidio has been recently opened which showcases a two-bedroom model designed by Trina Jacildo. Elegant yet comfortable interiors are detailed with finely crafted wood finishes to complement the enclave's neo-Victorian theme.

Urban lifestyle amenities

Future residents can find balance between work and play with the facilities that will suit their urban lifestyle. A Town Center will house commercial establishments, bringing choice shops and restaurants in the backyards of Presidio residents while privacy and security is maintained. Also a Village Center will offer athletic and leisure facilities such as a swimming pool, clubhouse, day-care center, game room, multipurpose sports center and gym a few steps away from home.



A TASTE of San Francisco at Presidio's Renoir Tower

Presidio rises above other conventional condos with the presence of landscaped courtyards, parks and playgrounds, and wide sidewalks ideal for jogging while breathing in fresh breeze from the lake or gazing at the Sierra Madre Mountains. The pool is already under construction and residents can start taking a dip by the first quarter of 2008. One can also relax at The Wharf, Lakefront City Central's thriving commercial complex.

Strategic location

Previously launched towers at Presidio include Bellini, Da Vinci, Picasso, Michelangelo, Rembrandt and Monet. The community is near prime educational institutions, medical facilities and lifestyle centers.

The future link to Circumferential Road 6 (C6) will cut travel time to the metro's central business districts by half, while rehabilitation and modernization of the South Metro Rail Transit System will reduce transportation time from Caloocan to Alabang to 30 minutes.

CrownAsia (www.crownasia.com.ph) is a proud affiliate of Vista Land & Lifescapes Inc., the Philippines' largest homebuilder offering homes for all income segments and catering to different lifestyles across the country.

SIMPLY step outside to enjoy a relaxing afternoon with your family in the 6.8-hectare lushly landscaped grounds of Presidio.

The Manors in the city

IT IS CERTAINLY ONE OF THE MAJOR decisions you will have to make in your life—where to live and raise your family.

Your weekends would be even more pleasant if you did not lose precious time spent in that long drive to church, and afterward, to the mall for more bonding time with your family. The good news is there is such a place, and what's more, it is located in the quieter side of the city. The Manors at Celebrity Place is just the address you are looking for.

Conveniently located

The Manors is the only English-inspired exclusive residential community that provides quick access to the finest educational institutions as well as centers of commerce and recreation. It is conveniently located in between Zuzuaregui Road and Capitol Hills Drive in Old Balara in Diliman, in the nation's former capital, Quezon City.

Diliman is home to some of the country's finest educational institutions such as the Ateneo de Manila University and Miriam College on Katipunan Avenue, and the state university, the University of the Philippines. Among the churches located near The Manors are the Chapel of the Holy Sacrifice in UP, Nuestra Señora de la Estrada on Katipunan Avenue, the Sta. Clara Church and the Iglesia ni Cristo on Commonwealth Avenue.

The Manors is also near the country's best hospitals such as the Philippine Heart Center, the National Kidney and Transplant Institute, the Philippine Lung Center, St. Luke's Medical Center, and the World Citi Medical Center.

Preferred site

Quezon City is now hailed as the country's information technology capital, being the preferred site for call centers as well as BPOs, which have offices in Libis, Cubao and Commonwealth, not far from Diliman. Among the ICT companies that have chosen to establish offices here are IBM, eTelecare, Convergys, Teletech, Accenture, Sitel and Sykes Asia.

Numerous business establishments have also been attracted to locate in Quezon City due to its large consumer market as well as manpower pool, making it a cost-effective location. Real estate values are very competitive.

The Ortigas Center and Makati, the country's premiere business and financial center, are easily accessible through the main thoroughfares of Edsa, the longest highway in the metropolis, and C5, which connects the eastern area of the city where The Manors is conveniently located. Two elevated light rail transit systems (MRT3 and LRT2) also make commuting to and from Quezon City that much easier.

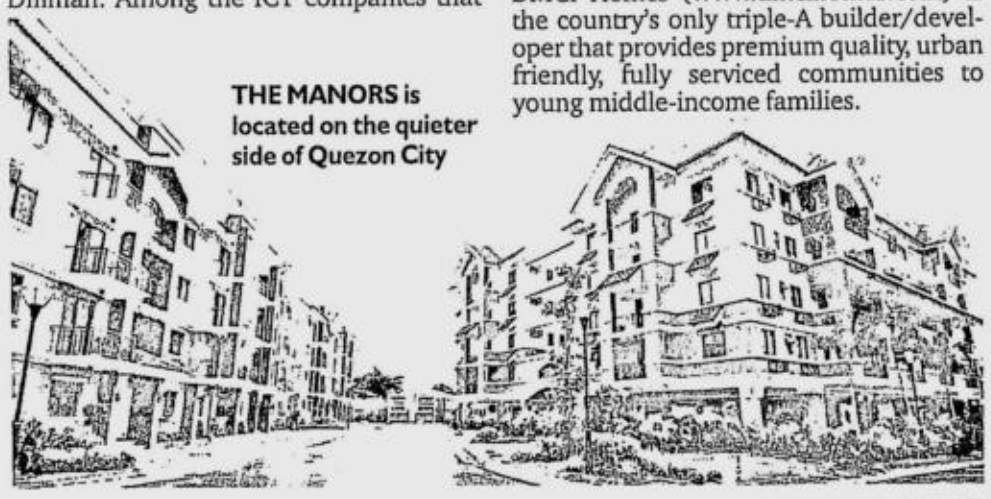
The Manors is also near some of the biggest dining and shopping centers like the new Trinoma Mall, the expanded SM City North Edsa, Robinsons and Ever Commonwealth Mall, the Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall, Eastwood City in Libis, as well as the new Gateway Mall at the Araneta Center in Cubao.

Mid-rise condos

The Manors is composed of seven mid-rise residential buildings that sit comfortably on 8,975 square meters of prime land. Exactly 158 units measuring from 60 to 120 sq m tandem units provide more than ample space for growing families.

The mid-rise condos feature single-loaded corridors as well as a common stairway shared only by two units per floor. The units in the upper floors feature balconies, while the residents on the ground floor can enjoy a garden. DMCI Homes dedicated 60 percent of the total development to open spaces and lush gardens for the family's enjoyment.

The Manors at Celebrity Place is another prime development of DMCI Homes. DMCI Homes (www.dmcihomes.com) is the country's only triple-A builder/developer that provides premium quality, urban friendly, fully serviced communities to young middle-income families.



THE MANORS is located on the quieter side of Quezon City

Landco brings expertise in residential resorts to condo living

LANDCO PACIFIC CORP. PIONEERS YET another innovative concept in residential-resort lifestyle living through its first condominium project in Metro Manila, TRIbeca Private Residences.

The development, which is set to rise on a 9.7-hectare property off the Sucat Interchange, fuses the features and amenities that have made Landco's previous projects pioneers in their respective niche markets.

"Landco always makes sure that it gives something extra in its developments, something to set them apart from the others. Even if other developers have imitated our projects, they can't really outdo the first. We take pleasure in being copied," says Barbie Lanuza, TRIbeca sales director.

And TRIbeca, she adds, will be another first for the company.

"It will be the only condominium that will offer the residential-resort lifestyle that Landco has pioneered and popularized. At a mid-end price, residents will definitely enjoy high-end amenities," Lanuza says.

"When residents step out of their units, they'd feel like they're in a resort. In fact, you could call TRIbeca a condominium resort as it infuses all the best features of its other residential resorts," Lanuza says.

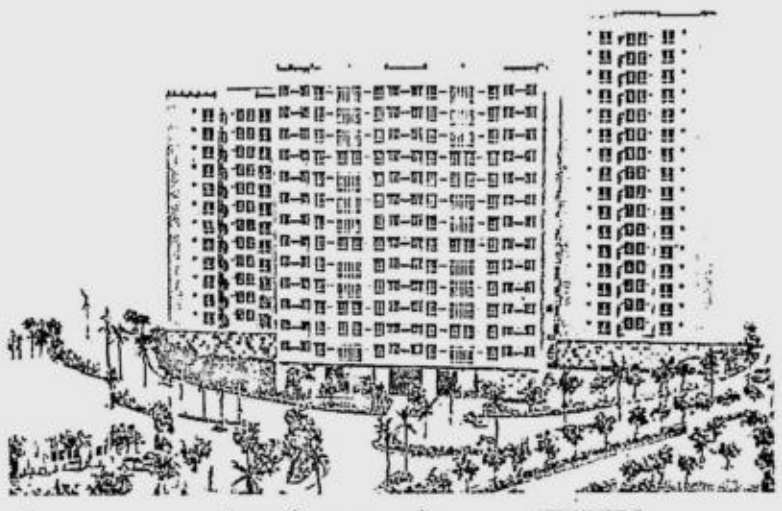
Areas lush with flowering plants and trees take inspiration from Landco's widely copied Ponderosa Leisure Farms. Vast wide open spaces filled with verdant green and a tree-lined singular circular road (aptly called the TRIbeca Circle), meanwhile, remind one of Leisure Farms.

Then there's the 1,800-sq-m Aqua Park which combines the features of Landco's other pool attractions.

It will have, for example, the Kid's Water Play area, sunken bar and tree courts of Playa Calatagan; massage cottages and sunken deck areas reminiscent of Punta Fuego's cabanas; a beach pool that simulates the powdery white sands of Peninsula de Punta Fuego; and an impressive infinity pool, a standard feature in all of Landco's residential resorts.

"And like that in Landco's other developments, TRIbeca also offers something new for its residents," Lanuza says, referring to its active spaces.

These are areas filled with amenities that cater to various fitness and recreational activities, basketball and badminton courts, social pavilions and barbecue areas, a playground, a game area with a giant chess board and chess pieces, and life-sized doll houses and a traverse wall for kids and adults, among others.



TRIBECA

Self-contained community

Lanuza adds that TRIbeca will likewise be a self-contained community with products and services made readily available for its residents.

Commercial and service-oriented establishments will be built into the development.

"TRIbeca's parking building is also quite unique as it is located away from the residential units. Shuttle services will be available 24 hours a day to help residents go to and from the building to their homes," Lanuza says.

TRIbeca Private Residences is being developed in partnership with ATR KimEng Land Inc., an affiliate of ATR KimEng Financial Corp., one of the largest nonbank investment houses in the country.

Landco Pacific is a multi-product developer of high-quality residential resorts, leisure farms, residential developments, shopping centers and CBDs as well as memorial parks. It continues to provide superior value in its developments and is widely recognized as a benchmark for innovative and outstanding lifestyle products that revolutionize the way we live.

The luxury of open spaces at Eastwood LeGrand

OVER IN THE EASTERN PART of the metro, there is one residential condominium where the adage that if you buy space, you do get so much more, holds true. It's at Eastwood City's newest gem of a project, Eastwood LeGrand.

Whether you get a spacious 1-bedroom or a luxurious 3-bedroom unit, you get exclusive access to all the amenities at the seventh floor podium deck. An Olympic-size pool and a wading pool await you and your family. A sun deck, lounge area and the children's playground offer other opportunities to while away the time or create memorable moments. A modern fitness center is also located at the same floor, perfect to shed pounds and tone muscles.

But once you step out of the wonderful Art Deco creation that is the Eastwood LeGrand, you deem that your purchase is worth so much more. Walk along the romantic Palm Avenue, with its tall palm trees swaying with the wind. A few more strides and you're at the Eastwood City Walk, whose many restaurants offer a cornucopia of gastronomic delights. From breakfast to lunch meetings, and even dinner dates, it's best to hold it here.

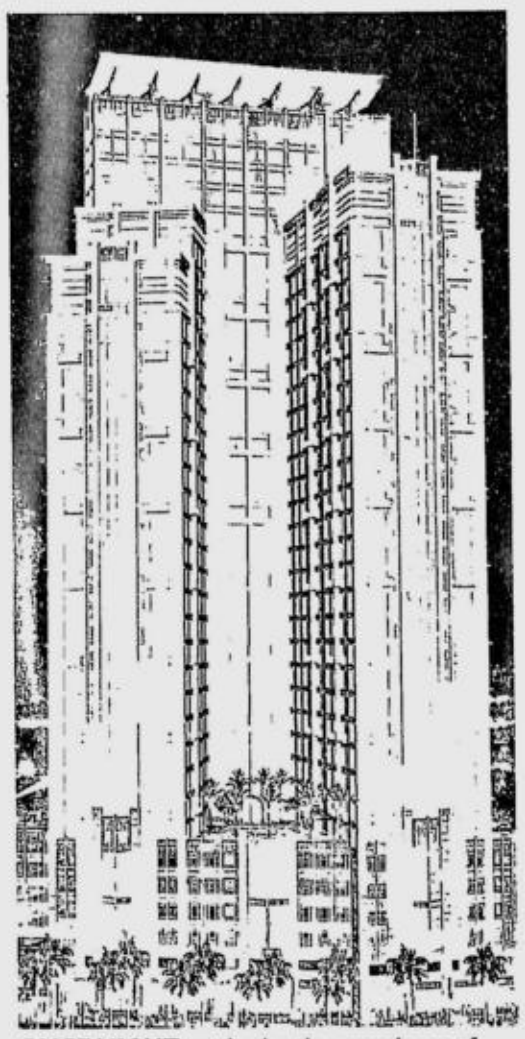
Brisk walking experience

The circular road leads you to the Eastwood Central Plaza. During the daytime, its landscaped outskirts offer a brisk walking experience with the kids or your pets. But once night settles in, the flickering lights change the Central Plaza to a haven for music and dancing. This is the beat of life, and it pulsates very radiantly at Eastwood City.

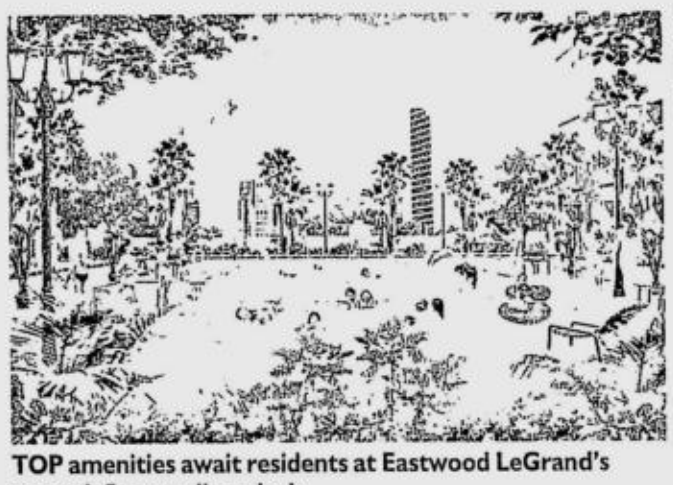
Further down the road, you see something new. Set to open soon, the Central Park hosts other fascinating open spaces that Eastwood City has come to be known for. A lagoon with bridges and a water fountain that gushes water so tall will further excite Eastwood City residents. Within the landscaped park along the lagoon's shores, new restaurants will whip up exciting dishes that will complement this area's paradise feel.

"The relaxed feel and ambiance at Eastwood City is magnified by the abundance of open spaces and the security and safety that go along with the place. This is the lifestyle that many of our residents have experienced already, which residents of Eastwood LeGrand will surely love as well," Eastwood Property Holdings Inc. FVP John Natividad declared.

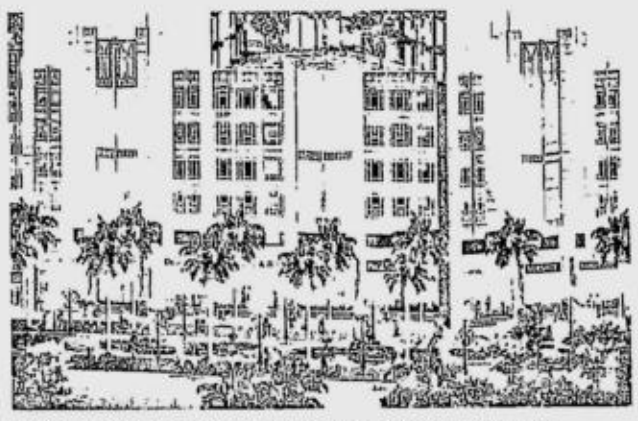
The Eastwood LeGrand showroom is located at Eastwood City's posh Orchard Road.



ONCE NIGHT settles in, the grandness of Eastwood LeGrand's Art Deco façade becomes more apparent.



TOP amenities await residents at Eastwood LeGrand's seventh floor podium deck.



A SHORT elevator ride takes Eastwood LeGrand residents to luxurious shopping for top brands at the building's ground floor level.

Lantana Lane a Mañosa signature property

A PIONEERING CONCEPT IN REAL estate development will soon be launched by Mañosa Properties Inc., a new player in the local property industry.

Lantana Lane, a low-density development located on Lantana Street in New Manila, Quezon City, will consist of only 16 exclusive luxury townhomes in a sprawling 2,800-sqaure-meter suburban garden setting.

The project is designed by distinguished architect Francisco "Bobby" Mañosa, renowned for such landmarks as The Coconut Palace, Pearl Farm Resort, the Edsa Shrine, the New Medical City and Shangri-La Mactan.

Dino Mañosa, chief executive officer and founder of Mañosa Properties, said "We are very excited about Lantana Lane and I am honored that my father has committed his company's design genius to this undertaking."

Masterplan

Lantana Lane's masterplan carries Bobby Mañosa's unmistakable design philosophy of "Contemporary Tropical Filipino Architecture." The units are all similar in design and layout with high ceilings for natural ventilation and huge windows to maximize natural lighting.

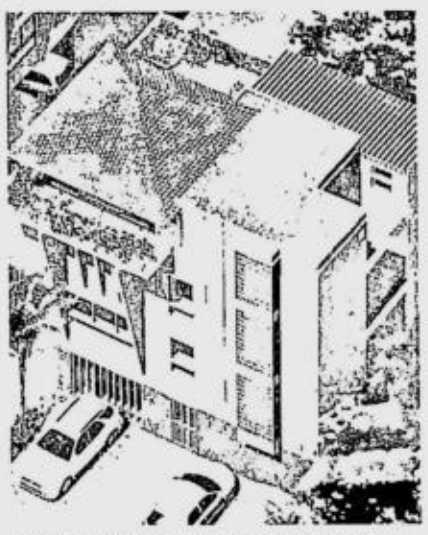
The gated property has dedicated open garden areas for the community and a children's playground. The single-lane road is a generous 5-meter wide with 1-meter wide sidewalk curbs on either sida as opposed to a typical townhouse development where a narrow lane is given for the community to squeeze into.

Aside from the two parking spaces each home gets, another two parking slots per home for guests are also given within the community. The property will have 24-hour security. A standby generator is also provided for the common areas.

Each unit at Lantana Lane has a floor area of almost 400 square meters, consisting of three floors plus a full penthouse; four full bedrooms with toilet and bath, ample closet and storage space, rooftop entertainment area with optional jacuzzi and roof garden. The design also includes separate quarters for the maid and driver, each with a toilet and bath.

The units are turned over already fitted and ready for occupancy. Mañosa Properties' presentation materials show the unit at turnover condition and a sample of how it looks like after some interior decorating has been done.

LANTANA Lane reflects architect Francisco "Bobby" Mañosa's design philosophy of "Contemporary Tropical Filipino Architecture."



EACH unit at Lantana Lane has a floor area of almost 400 sq m consisting of 3 floors plus a full penthouse.

LANTANA Lane's rooftop entertainment area comes with a roof garden and optional jacuzzi.

Just like most of Bobby Mañosa's projects, Lantana Lane is a "green development." Each unit comes with a rainwater harvesting facility that can process about 1,000 gallons for landscape maintenance, vehicle washing and water closet supply. The whole property is designed with zero-waste management concept to be agreed upon and managed by the association after completion.

The company also got the services of a fung shui master to look over the project from the very start. "This way feng shui believers will only need to get a consultant for their own homes and not worry about the rest of the development," Mañosa says.

Service company

The company's design philosophy aside, Mañosa Properties is not your typical property development group. "We are actually a service company providing real estate development management services," Mañosa quips. As such, investors or home buyers just hire the company to implement the project concept which we presented to them beforehand.

Buyers get their units practically at cost or about 30 percent less then a comparable project as done by a traditional developer. Mañosa Properties only charges a minimum service fee for packaging and project management as compensation.

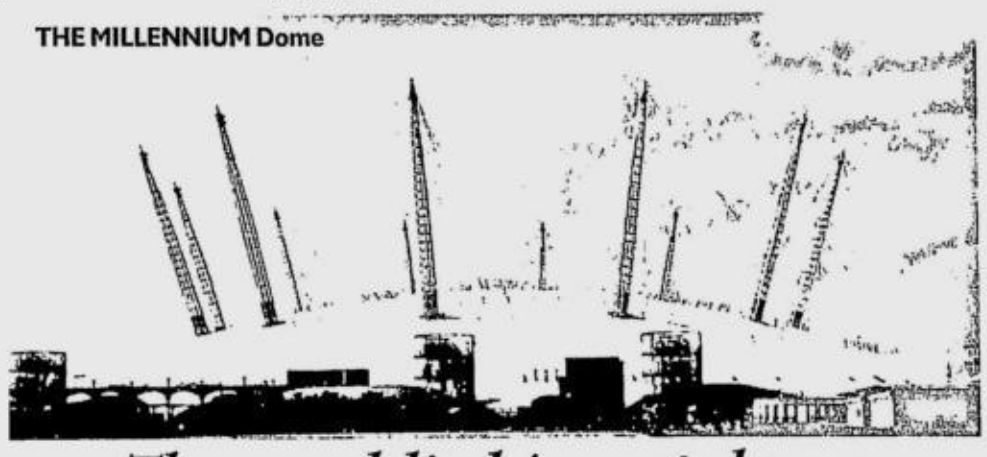
Units at Lantana Lane come at a direct cost of only P15.5 million for typical homes (13 units) and about P17 million for special homes which have an adjacent outdoor garden attached to the lot (three units only).

Foolproof financing scheme

Another unique feature of the project is that buyers can acquire a unit through a foolproof financing scheme based on the "Built to Own," "Communidades" or "Shared Development" model. Buyers give their down payment to a trust account in a designated bank, in this case, Banco de Oro plus their postdated checks of equal payments for the balance.

The bank then releases the funds to Mañosa Properties and its proponents every month following a third party project manager's construction schedule. Buyers are therefore assured that their funds will be used only for the project, as signed and agreed by Mañosa Properties (www.manosa-properties.com), its clients and the bank. BDO also offers home financing for its buyers.

THE MILLENNIUM Dome



The world's biggest dome

By Emman Cena

IF EVERY FILIPINO ARTIST WISHES TO break ground on live performance by conquering the Big Dome (or the Araneta Coliseum), then to stage a concert at the Millennium Dome is the ultimate goal.

The Millennium Dome is an exhibition hall built on the Meridian Line in Greenwich, England to celebrate the start of the new millennium. It opened its doors to the public on Jan. 1, 2000 and ran until Dec. 31, that year. For the record, it is the world's biggest constructed dome in history.

Renamed in 2005 after the mobile phone company O_2, the Millennium Dome was then converted into a multifunctional sports and entertainment complex worth £750 million. Within the complex are a number of buildings used for many different events, including concerts. According to plans, the dome will be used in the 2012 Olympics as the venue for gymnastics, basketball and handball finals.

The dome's structure

Its cover is made of PTFE-coated glass fiber estimated to last 25 years. The structure, designed by the Richard Rogers Partnership, is 320 meters in diameter and 50 m high at its center. It is twice the size of the Wembley stadium and covers 20 acres of ground floor space. The structure is expected to last until 2018. After that year, developers are allowed to demolish the dome and redevelop the site.

AWESOME STRUCTURES

From outside, the dome appears as a large white marquee with 100 m high yellow support towers, one for each month of the year, or each hour of the clock face, representing the role played by Greenwich Mean Time. In plan view it is circular, 365 m in diameter—one meter for each day of the year—with scalloped edges.

Reference: wwp.millennium-dome.com, wwp.greenwich2000.com.

Edsa Grand Residences ideal for OFW investment

THE CONTINUING INFLOW OF REmittances sent by overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) back to their families in the Philippines is prompting these migrant workers to seriously consider where they can wisely invest their hard-earned money.

Most common investment options available to OFWs include time deposits, government bonds, small-scale businesses, the stock market and real estate.

Caesar Tan, real estate developer and vice president of Edsa Grand Realty, believes that real estate investments are one of the most financially rewarding and high yielding.

Sound investments

"Earnings channeled to real estate developments—such as condominiums, townhouses, and single-detached homes—are sound investments. This is because the value of real estate consistently rises over time," Tan said

"This is why I urge many OFWs to place their earnings on real estate and mortgage investments instead of consumer goods or other, more risky investment schemes. Investments made on condos can generate regular rental income," Tan said.

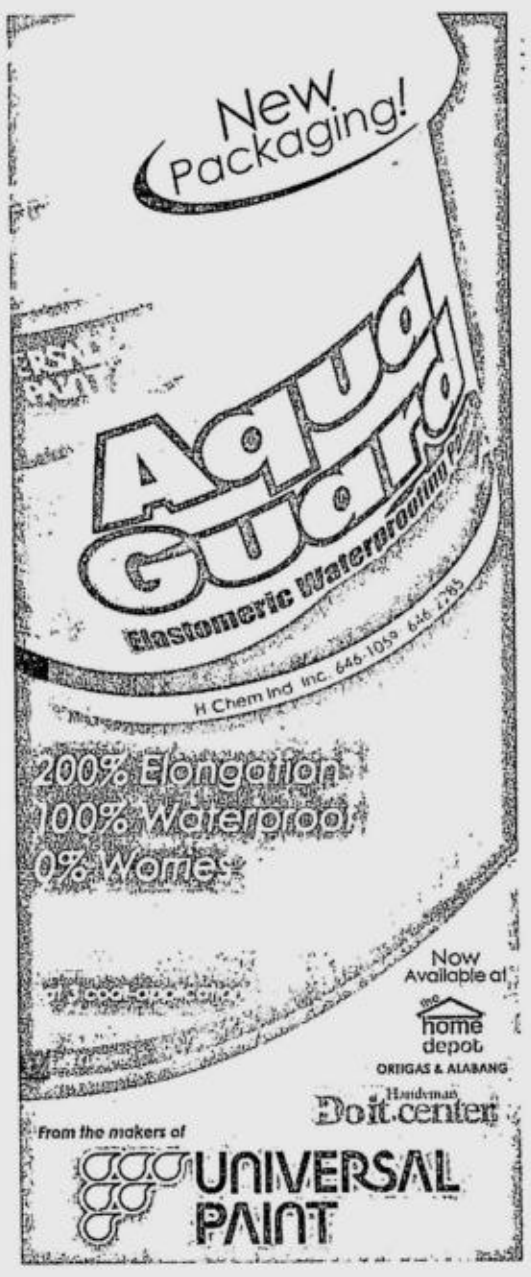
"Every Filipino family dreams of owning a decent home, a place where they can live when they retire. We at Edsa Grand Realty want to help OFWs achieve this dream," said Tan, who manages Edsa Grand Residences, a 30-story condominium located at the corner of Edsa and Corregidor Street in Quezon City.

Edsa Grand Residences (www.edsagrand.com) is near Quezon City's bustling businesses district, shopping and commercial areas, hospitals and medical centers, government offices and educational institutions.

Amenities, facilities

When completed in 2010, Edsa Grand Residences will have a grand lobby, retail shops, a swimming pool, a wading pool for children, a fitness center and sauna, a multipurpose hall and function room, among others. The building will be equipped with high-speed elevators, a cistern and overhead water tanks, waste-disposal facilities and electric generators. Condominium units will each be equipped with phone systems and doorbells (for residential units).

To ensure tight security for residents, state-of-the-art closed-circuit television and monitoring systems, fire protection and sprinkler systems, fire detection devices, an automated vehicular traffic system, and other measures will be put in place at the condominium.



Bringing healing back to our planet

DESIGN DIMENSIONS

Isabel Berenguer Asuncion

A FEW WEEKS AGO I WAS AT the Greenbuild 2007 conference in Chicago, where more than 22,000 delegates—architects, builders, developers, planners and real estate developers and managers—packed registration lines, seminar rooms and exhibition halls, to learn ways to become more energy-efficient and improve the livability of the built environment.

The opening plenary session was keynoted by former US President Bill Clinton. He announced that the foundation he represented, the Clinton Climate Initiative, was launching partnerships to retrofit buildings with green technologies in an attempt to curb climate change. Its goal was to change the viscera of America's structures in an attempt to be carbon neutral by year 2030.

No doubt the task is daunting but the need is equally pressing in the culture of excess that is the United States. There almost everything is supersized or XXL and there are no holds barred in the area of consumption.

Night lighting

During my evening strolls in Chicago, I noted that despite this city being one of the greenest in the United States, night lighting was used generously. Façades of buildings, structures and environmental art were flooded with light. Lamp posts were abundant and lit from the early evenings to the wee hours of morning.

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Creating a conducive, healthy workplace

By Tess S. Samaniego

A PERFECT workplace is important to improve one's well-being and productivity.
WWW.FYPCOM

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Some tips

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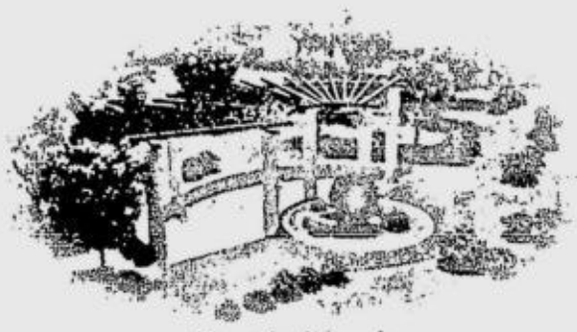
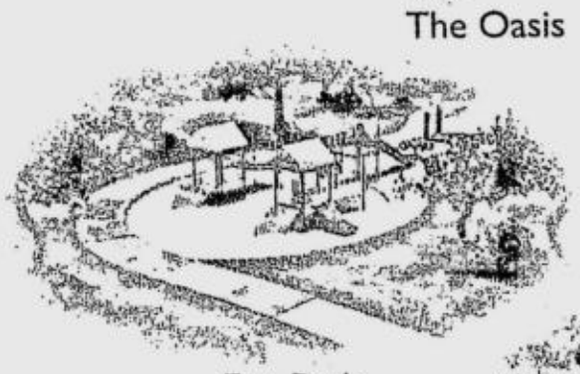
(Source: www.tchiconsulting.com)

The Oasis

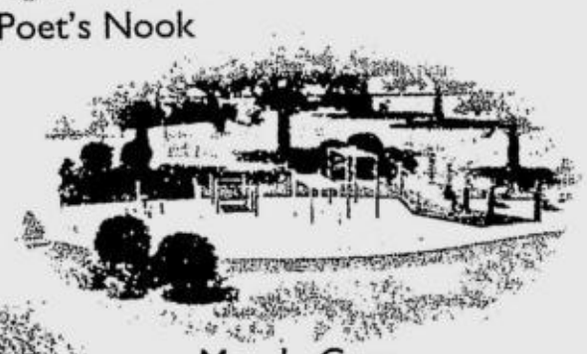
Nirvana Cove


Poet's Nook


Fun Park

Nature's Orchestra

Picnic Groove


Muscle Cove

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Woodsville VIVERDE mansions

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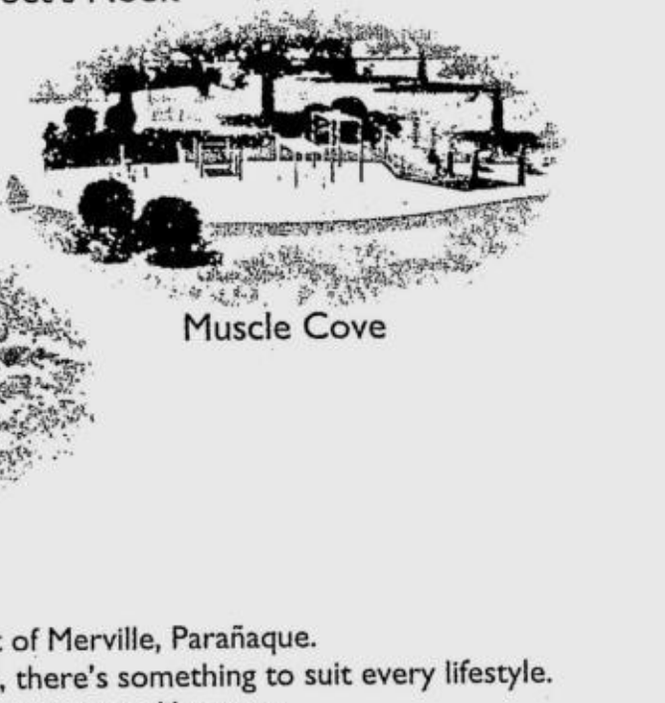

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DESIGN DIMENSIONS

Isabel Berenguer Asuncion

A FEW WEEKS AGO I WAS AT the Greenbuild 2007 conference in Chicago, where more than 22,000 delegates—architects, builders, developers, planners and real estate developers and managers—packed registration lines, seminar rooms and exhibition halls, to learn ways to become more energy-efficient and improve the livability of the built environment.

The opening plenary session was keynoted by former US President Bill Clinton. He announced that the foundation he represented, the Clinton Climate Initiative, was launching partnerships to retrofit buildings with green technologies in an attempt to curb climate change. Its goal was to change the viscera of America's structures in an attempt to be carbon neutral by year 2030.

No doubt the task is daunting but the need is equally pressing in the culture of excess that is the United States. There almost everything is supersized or XXL and there are no holds barred in the area of consumption.

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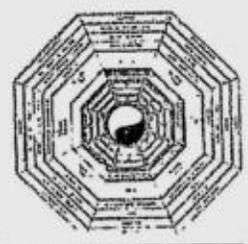

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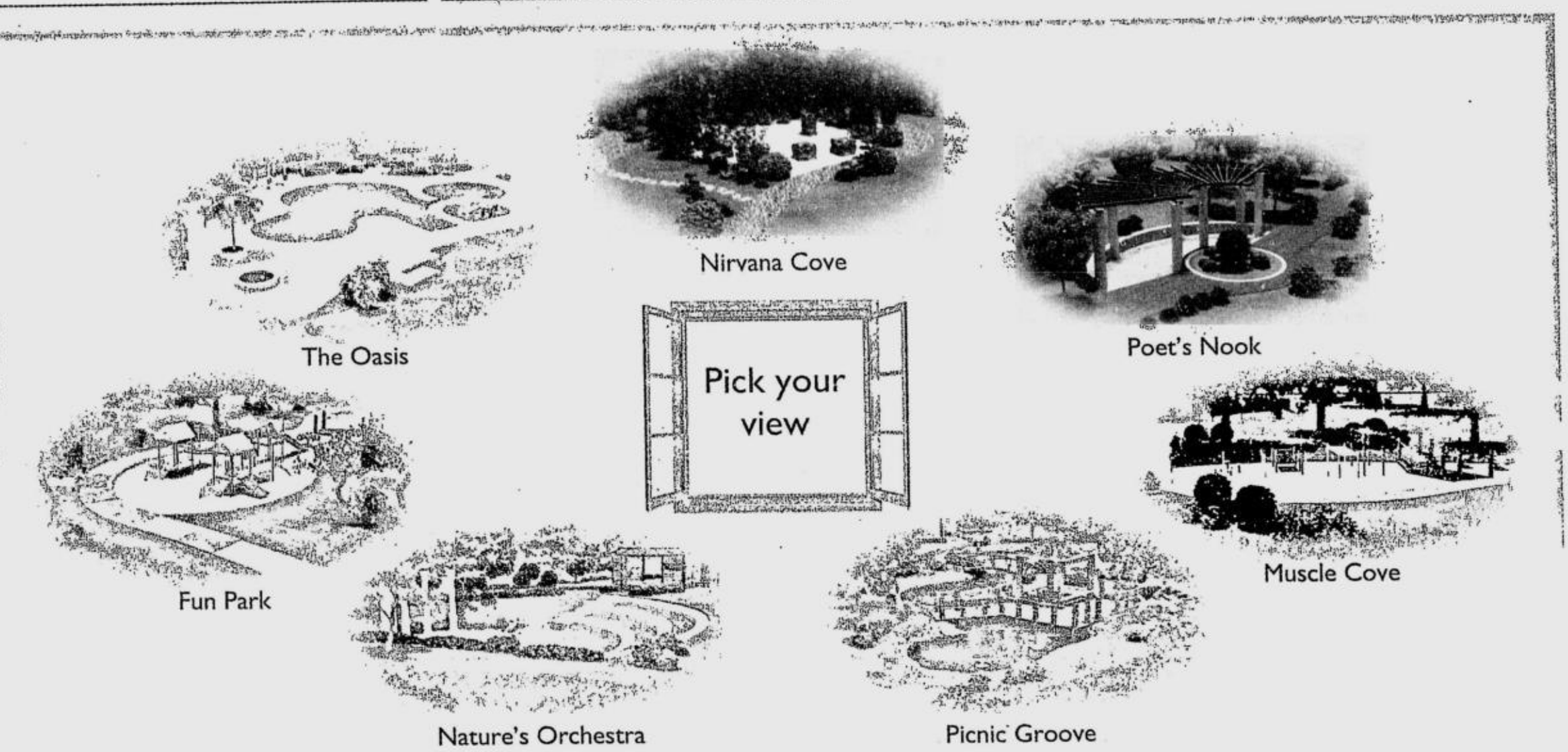


This is FLY WITH SUPER Summer Unleash Playground Electronic Recreation SCORE WITH SUPER

MODEL: HEART EVANGELISTA
PHOTO BY JILL LEJANO
ARTWORK BY JANNA SAMMER LEJANO
MAKEUP BY GELA LAUREL
HAIR BY JERRY JAVIER
CLOTHES BY PENSHOPPE

CARNIVAL FUN. To relax, Heart surfs and skateboards

Toying around

FLY WITH SUPER
Pilot: Pam Pastor - Co-Pilot: Katrina A. Holigores - First Officers: Tots Diaz, James Gabrillo, Wango Gallaga, Joana Marcelina, Paolo Reyes - Air Traffic Controller: Abel Ulanday - Cabin Crew: Belen Belesario, L.A. Mistades - Ground Control: Ma-ann Ayos, Rhea Camongol, Lilia Lazaro

She's a doll

Heart Evangelista may be all grown up now but she allowed herself to be transformed into a life-sized doll for this special Super shoot

BLUE FAIRY. "I am very blessed with the job that I have. You influence a lot of people," said Heart.

Text by Pam Pastor
Photos by Jill Lejano
Artwork by Janna Sammer Lejano

"IF YOU MET ME A few years ago, you wouldn't last a second with me. I was so full of myself," said Heart Evangelista, who was sitting in a makeup room in DPI studios. She continued talking. "I didn't mean to be like that, I was just innocent about a lot of things. I was young and confused. But I've grown up."

Clearly, she has. From the 13-year-old girl who joined show business against her father's wishes, Heart has blossomed into an independent young woman. Gone are the bodyguard, *yaya* and bouncer who used to shadow her every move, she now lives on her own. "I like going to the grocery. I like the Sex and the City lifestyle. I cook monggo, steak, *tuyo*. I'm not so *ignorante* anymore. I used to have nothing to share but fashion and laughter. But now I have wisdom and it's better than ever."

She chalks up her growth to meeting actor Jericho Rosales, her boyfriend of three years now, who she says taught her a lot about life. "He influenced me. He took my innocence away, my being naive."

And although her parents are still coming to terms with her desire to be free, she said, "We're rebuilding our relationship. I want them to get to know who I am."

Heart may be all grown up now but she temporarily abandoned adult world for this special Super shoot, allowing the creative team to transform her into a life-sized doll, inspired by the popular Pinky St. dolls from Japan. On these pages, she models clothes from Penshoppe's Holiday Collection.

How do you feel about being a Penshoppe endorser?

It's a really big deal for me. It's not a one-year deal, it's a family, they really treat you as a family.

What do you like about the brand? What are your top Penshoppe picks?

The makeup is really nice. They have this lipgloss palette. I like that they cater to different people, they consider what simple people like to wear and yet they make it trendy. They don't stick to one style.

Describe your personal style, off-camera.

I like being simple and classy. I don't show too much skin. I like shopping. My goal for 2008 is to collect Chanel bags in different colors.

What are you busy with now?

I just shot two commercials. I have a big campaign for 2008.

What do you love about being in show business?

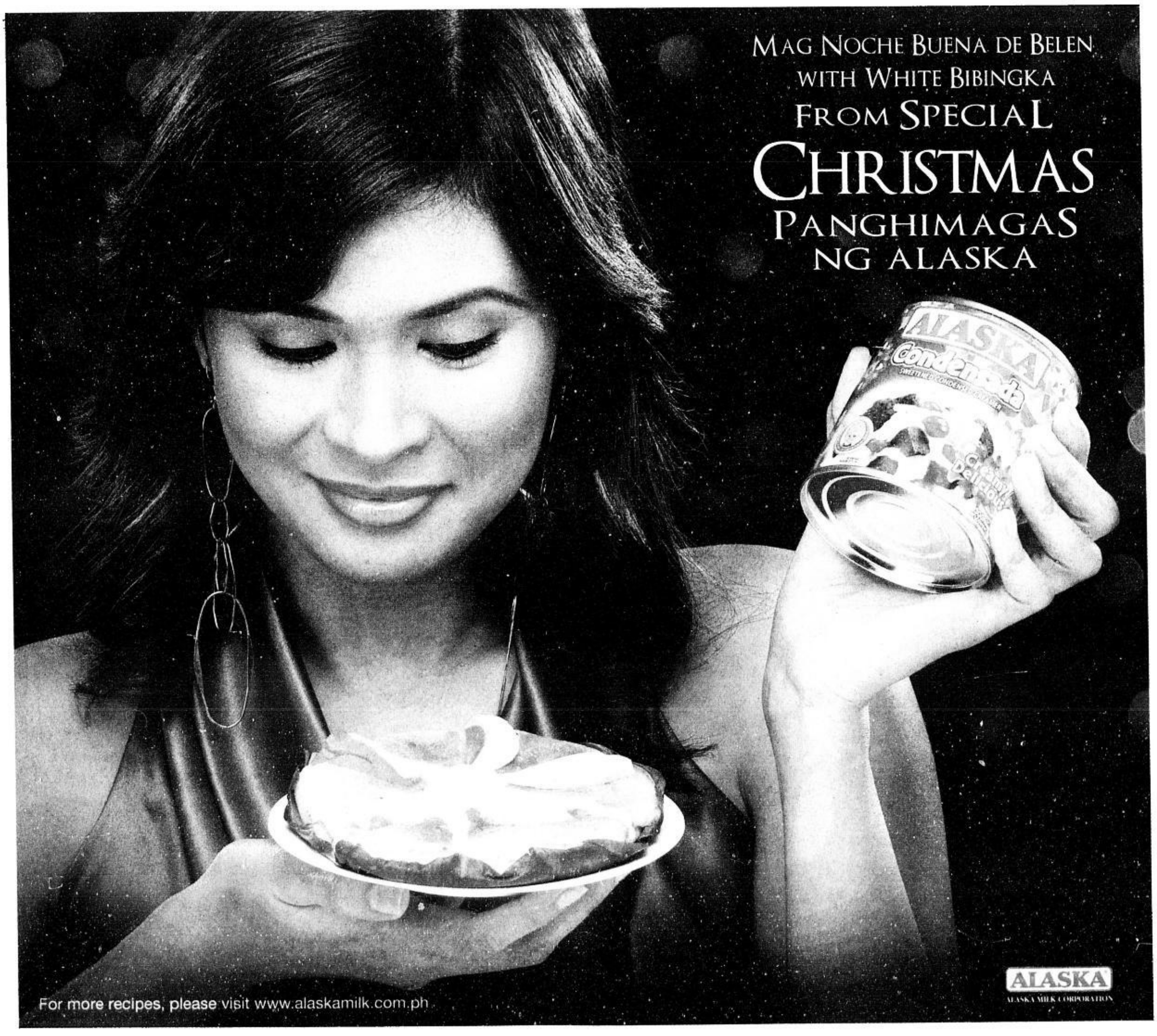
I love the feeling that I was 13 when I started and now that I'm 22 I have achieved a lot. And whether you decide to do this for the rest of your life or not you know that you've contributed something. At the end of the day, when I go to heaven, I can say, I did everything.

What do you hate about being in show business?

There's a lot of brainwashing. I used to care about what people said but eventually you realize it's really a part of it. *Chismis* is always gonna be there. But what I really don't like is how it can change you, how it can make your head a big. You're surrounded by people who adore you but it's not a forever thing. You have to really find yourself and hold on to who you really are because you can get lost.

How do you make sure you stay grounded?

By having real friends, by having people who really know



BEAR NECESSITY. Heart is in love with animals and wants to put up her own shelter

you. You really have to have your friends and you really have to have your family.

What are you passions?

I surf, I paint, I love ice skating, I'm not so good though. I sing, I have a lot of songs, I'm just a bit anxious to share them because they're a bit personal. Yeah, I write songs as well. But my biggest passion is really acting.

You have a big love for animals too right?

Yeah. I have five dogs, not counting the dogs we have with my parents—we have like 10, 12. I'm active with the Philippine Animal Welfare Society.

What's a normal day like for you?

I didn't have normal days before—a normal day would be taking a shower in ABS-CBN and going straight to work. But I have normal days now. I love going to the grocery, I love it. If you want to see me in person, you'll see me in Greenbelt, I'm always there. I wake up, run around Salcedo, walk my dog, get my nails done, go to voice lessons, go to the mall and watch movies. I'll watch anything except horror.

What do you love about what you do?

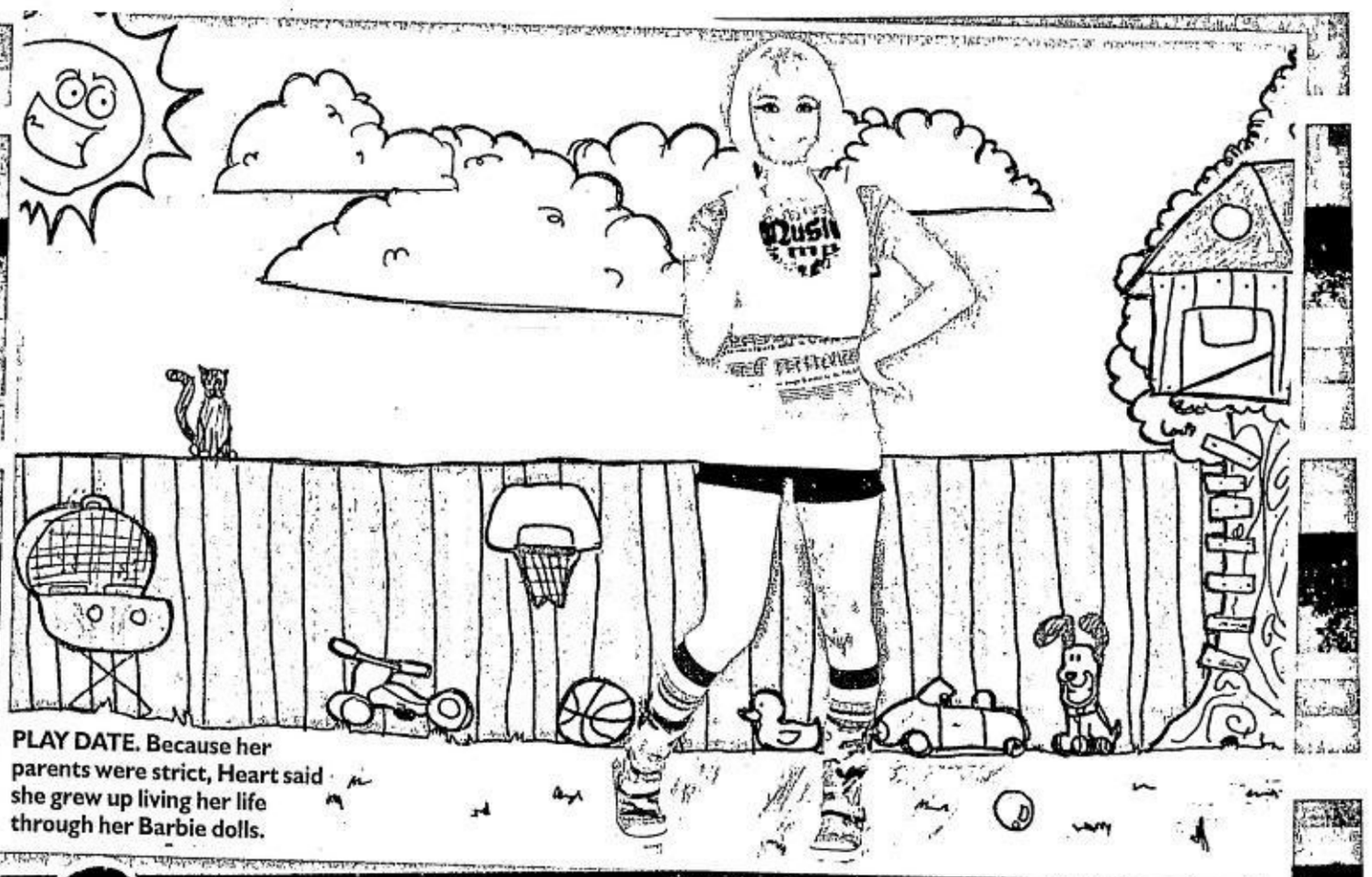
I am very blessed with the job that I have. You influence a lot of people. It's a God-given opportunity. It's hard in a way but I love it. Whether you're famous or not, when you speak and people hear it, you're inspiring other people. I know it's a very beauty queen answer but it's really true.

How do you relax?

I surf twice a month. I skateboard.

You skateboard? That's a surprise—people think of you as a girly girl.

I understand, I understand. I'm really *maarte* but I'm sporty. I grew up with an adventurous dad but I also had a Spanish mom who wanted me to sit up straight so I'm a mixture of both. It's funny though because when I fall, I really cry.



PLAY DATE. Because her parents were strict, Heart said she grew up living her life through her Barbie dolls.

What are your plans for the future?

I really wanna have my own business—something animal-related. My dreams are big. Filipinos are so talented and doors are opening for Asians. If Echo can reach all the way to Ghana, maybe I can conquer Asia in some way. Hopefully. In some ways I feel like it's time to move on, because there are so many new artists here who also need to show what they have to offer.

What's your ultimate goal?

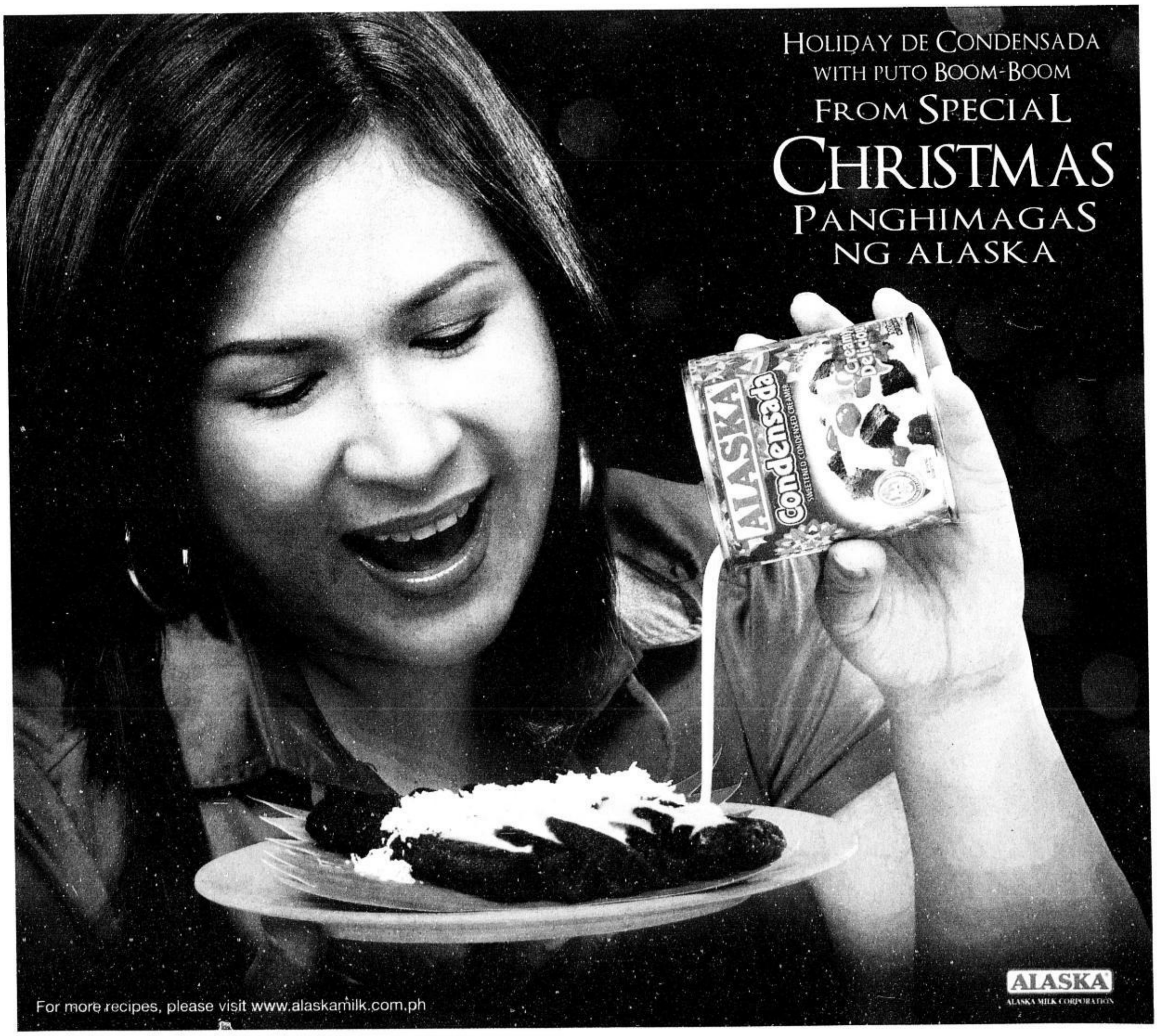
My biggest dream is to have my own animal shelter. I wanna head something like that, especially here in the Philippines where running over a dog is just... *wala lang*. They don't even have the decency to go down and pick the dog up.

You've always loved dogs?

Yeah because when I was a kid we were breeding German Shepherds. I was very young.

SHE'S/ C4

OUT OF THIS WORLD. Heart believes the secret to staying grounded is keeping her friends close.



SHOP GIRL. Heart is a huge shopping fan.

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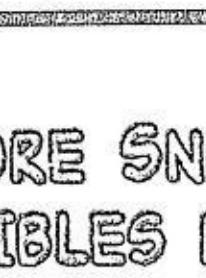
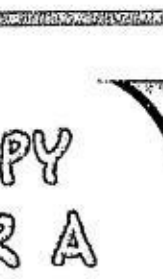


MUG WITH SPOON



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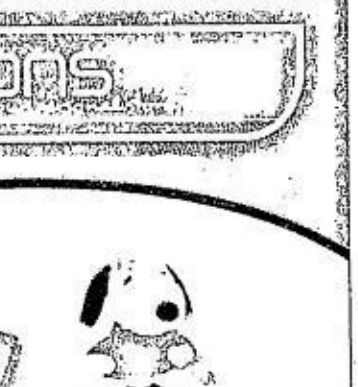
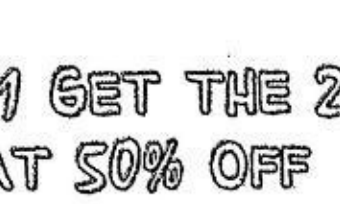


COSMETIC BAG



FLEECE BLANKET

See posters for details. Promo until January 2, 2008. Per DTI NCR Permit No. 5552 Series of 2007

Only @ Watsons

She's a doll

From page C2

What toys did you play with growing up?

I loved Barbies, I had a hundred plus Barbies. They were given to Salvation Army. Since my parents were strict, I lived my life with Barbies. Everything I wanted to do was happening with my Barbies. I have a stuffed toy, her name is Pinky, and she's still with me up to now.

What's the sweetest thing a fan has done for you?

They send me Louis Vuittons, they bring me all over New York to shop. It's so sweet. You don't really expect that from fans.

What can your fans look forward to?

I'm gonna come out with my own CD. Hopefully I will also release it in Australia. I released a single in Australia before. Two years later the producer was trying to call me and I didn't know that it reached 18th in the top 50 charts in Australia. The Pussycat Dolls and Black Eyed Peas were below me!

What's one thing people should know about you?

I really am *maarte* but I'm not irritating. It's different now. Before I was.

You think you were?

I was, I was irritating. I was really *maarte*. But it was just a phase, I was getting all the attention, I had people looking at me. I was such an airhead. I thought you paid your Meralco bills at the Meralco theater. I was a Jessica Simpson in the making. I didn't know that when you put Zonrox on your floor *yung ilalim ng sofa mo magiging puti*. I was really like that. But it's different now.

You grew out of it.

I think I'm cool now. (laughs)

When did this change happen?

Three years ago.

Around the time you met Jericho?

Oh yeah. Back then I didn't know what a manager's check was. I literally transferred my money from this bank to this bank because I was afraid if I signed a check my money would disappear. I didn't know how to cross the street. He brought me to Marikina and I was crying in the car because I remembered the Marikina Files. Jericho used to sell fish in the market, he used to eat oil and rice. That's how he started out. He even tried picking up garbage in Payatas. When I met him, he taught me to do so many things. I didn't know you can clean the floor with water and vinegar.

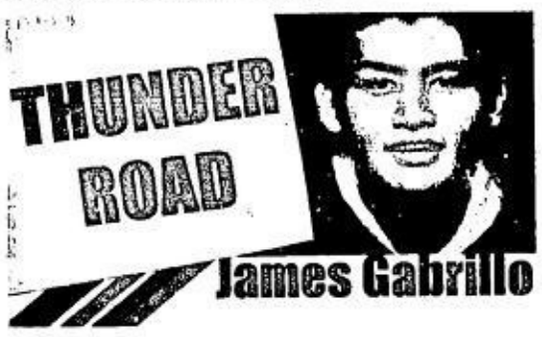
So you think if you didn't meet Jericho...

I'd still be the same. He needed to come. I always dreamt of that knight in shining armor who would rescue you from your castle and it's literally what happened. He's like a soldier, a knight, who has been around the world and has experienced so many battles and he rescued me and he brings me around the world and takes me on adventures. It's gonna be a happy ending.

Kinetically crafted

Super sits down with one of the biggest designer toy makers in the world

THE MAN WITH THE AWESOME JOB. This is Raymond Choy



James Gabrillo

WHEN I STARTED COLLECTing designer toys during my last year in high school, I called it "crate digging," but it was really just a nerdy pursuit to try and figure out identity.

My first encounter with the trend happened in the Museum of Contemporary Art in Tokyo, where I stood in one of the corners of a brightly lit room emblazoned with metallic blue wallpaper and furniture. School kids were crowding the area, but I wasn't distracted. How could I? There was no way I could have been distracted that time. There I was, marveling at the urban vinyl figures created by Japanese artist and designer Takashi Murakami.

The urban/designer toy movement was born in the late '90s, when Michael Lau showed up at an exhibition in Hong Kong with a handful of GI-Joe's that he had customized into hip-hop street fashion figures. The toys have gone a long way since then.

KINETICALLY/ D2

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Date	Event
Dec 2	Jollibee Kids Christmas Decor Activity
Dec 9	Stardanz The Grand Finals Showdown
Dec 16-24	Simbang Gabi
Dec 16	Abel Meholah Dance Explosion
	Meet and Greet Santa
Dec 22	Meet and Greet Santa
Dec 23	Destined to be a Star Talent Recital
Dec 25	Meet and Greet Santa

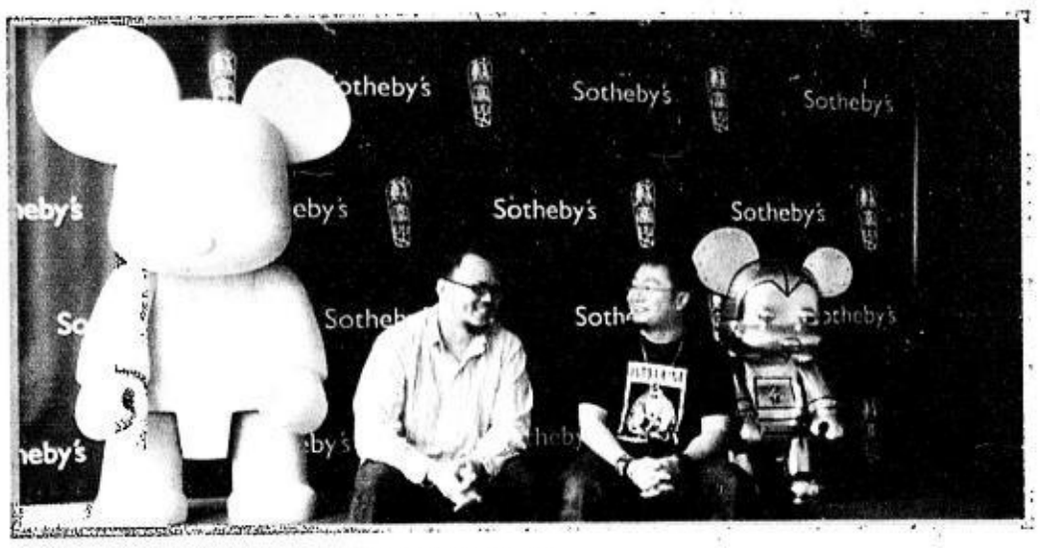
Tuesdays - Comedy Nights
Thursdays - Caroling Kids Contest Elimination
Saturdays - Mr. Sipag at Tiyaga Caravan Libreng Pangkabuhayan Workshop
Fridays, Saturdays & Sundays - Live Bands

Date	Event
Dec 8	Exhibit of Parol Entries at the Hub
Dec 9	Final Judging of Parol Entries at 3pm
	Awarding at 6pm (LP Parol Making Contest 2007)
Dec 15	Perfect Rhythm Christmas Recital
	Meet and Greet Santa
Dec 16	Grand Christmas Raffle Draw
Dec 29	Mother Butler Guild LP Chapter
	Grand Christmas Raffle Draw

Mondays and Thursdays - Audition Nights at Cuba Libre
Tuesdays - Retro Nights
Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays - Live Bands Performance at Cuba Libre
Fridays - Fireworks Display, RnB Nights at Cuba Libre
Fridays and Saturdays - Live Bands at Dencio's
Sundays - Conmedy Nights

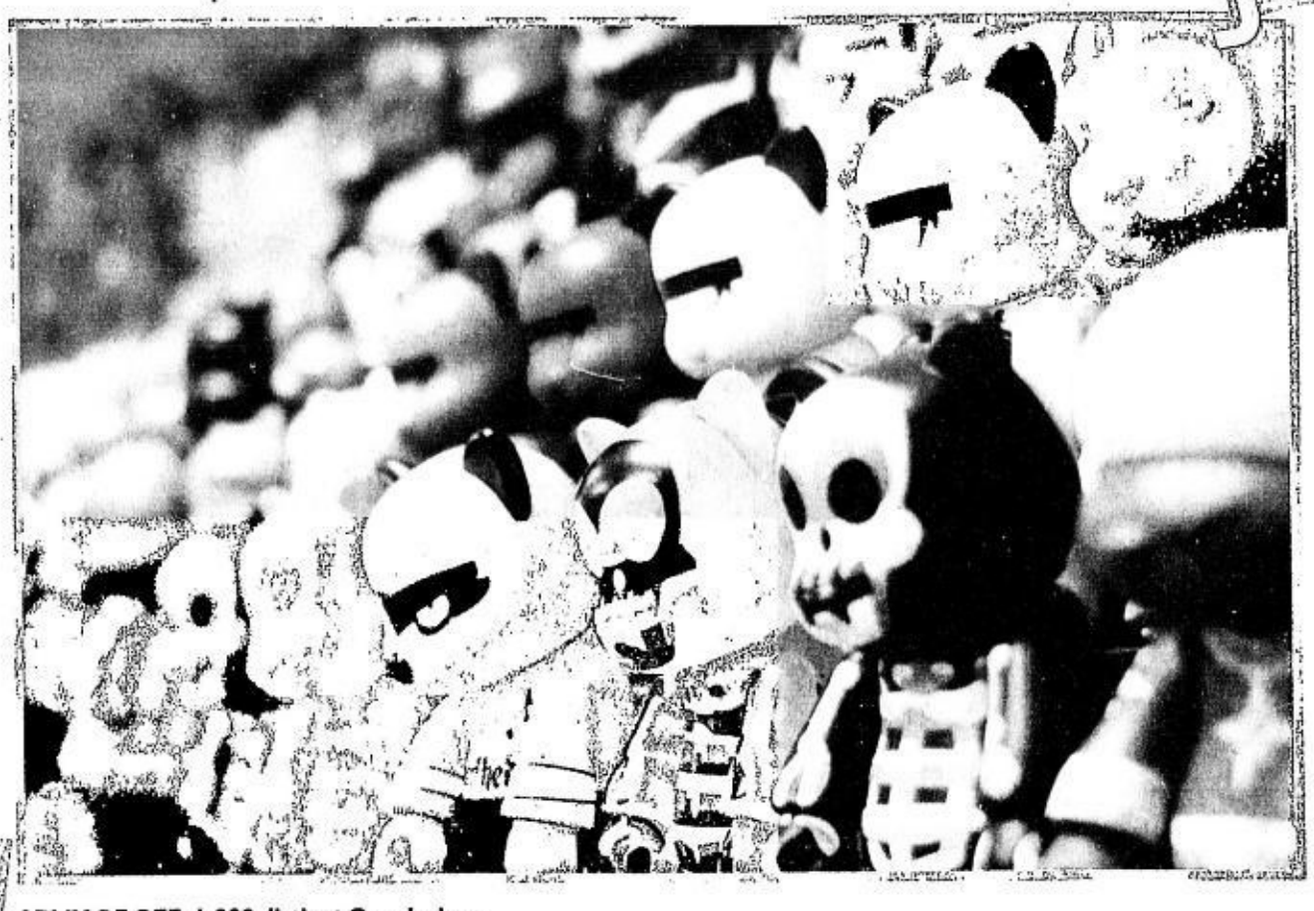
Date	Event
Dec 2	Jaross Gamboa Mall Tour
	Star Extreme Hip-Hop Weekly Eliminations
Dec 6-7	Mga Trabaho 2007
Dec 9	MDC Holiday Cheers Christmas Show
	Star Extreme Hip-Hop Weekly Eliminations
Dec 14	SMB Event "Paskong Samahang Walang Katulad"
	Power Job Fair
Dec 16	Meet and Greet Santa with Las Piñas Boys Choir
Dec 23	Grand Finals: Star Extreme Hip-Hop
	Meet and Greet Santa with Himig Muntinlupa Choir
	Grand Christmas Raffle Draw
	Grand Finals: Little Pop Star Contest
Dec 30	Grand New Year Raffle Draw
	Caloy and Calay Magic Comedy Show

Mondays - Audition Nights at Cuba Libre
Tuesdays and Wednesdays - Acoustic Nights at Cuba Libre
Fridays & Saturdays - Little Pop Star Eliminations
Saturdays - Mr. Sipag at Tiyaga Caravan Libreng Pangkabuhayan Workshop
Sundays - Mimes
Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays - Live Bands at Cuba Libre



MORE THAN JUST A GAME. In Sotheby's, Toy2R

Kinetically crafted



ARMY OF QEE. 1,000 distinct Qee designs

From page D1

People who have dived into the craze pool are usually either designers specializing in self-described lowbrow art or artists classically trained in design schools. The toymakers produce in limited editions, as few as five pieces and as many as a thousand. Because of their originality and rarity, vinyl toys are highly sought-after by the collectors, who are mostly adults.

Graffiti artists, DJs, and musicians from urban areas in Europe, North America and Asia have designed most of the vinyl toys produced in the last decade.

Qee's a megahit

Two years ago, I discovered a series of designer toys called Qee, pronounced "key." Produced in Hong Kong by lifestyle company Toy2R, Qee figures have a standard body type, but with head sculpts that may be of a dog (DoggyQ), a cat (KitCatQ), a rabbit (Bunee), a monkey (MonQ), or a bear (BearBearQ).

These mini figures stand 2.5 inch tall and condense multiple concepts into a tiny, irresistible package. Designed by cutting edge artists from across Asia, America and Europe, Qee figure series come assorted in "blind" boxes so that their identities are concealed. Believe it or not, there is even an 8-inch DIY (Do-It-Yourself) Qee program for aspiring designers with a touring gallery show.

A variety of international artists and designers have been involved in the creation of Qee figures since they first hit the market in 2001. Many distinctive styles have also been developed in conjunction with well-known household brands, including Adidas, Swatch, DKNY, Bart Simpson, Lane Crawford and Shu Uemura. Today there have been more than a thousand Qee designs that have been released.

Since purchasing my first Qee figure, a Knuckle Bear Qee created by Japanese character designer Touma, I have considered Toy2R as the top vinyl toymaker in the planet.

Catch the craze

Founded by toy mastermind Raymond Choy in 1995, Toy2R (which stands for "Toy to Raymond") is among the first companies to explore the potential of the designer toy. It was created out of an obsession for art toys, and has been stretching the boundaries between product design, art, and graphics for years.

Raymond shares, "I set up the toy store in MongKok. I started this toy business primarily because I am a toy collector—because I had collected too many toys and needed to sell some. I had a lot of Spawn figures, which were extremely popular in Hong Kong, so I started by selling my extras. As we were the only store which had so many rare collectibles, we attracted the attention of other toy companies who wanted us to carry their items. From then on, I would shuttle to Japan once a month to look for new stocks. Getting to travel regularly because of my work was amazing!"

For Raymond, inspiration comes from looking closer at the small details of everyday living. "I believe design is everywhere. We are living with it. Each day, I maintain an open mind for ideas. I read the newspapers and magazines, and I watch the TV. The brain has to be working all day long. Once an idea comes, I meet with my design team so we can translate the vision into a project."

WILLY WONKA AND THE TOY FACTORY. It's about the little details

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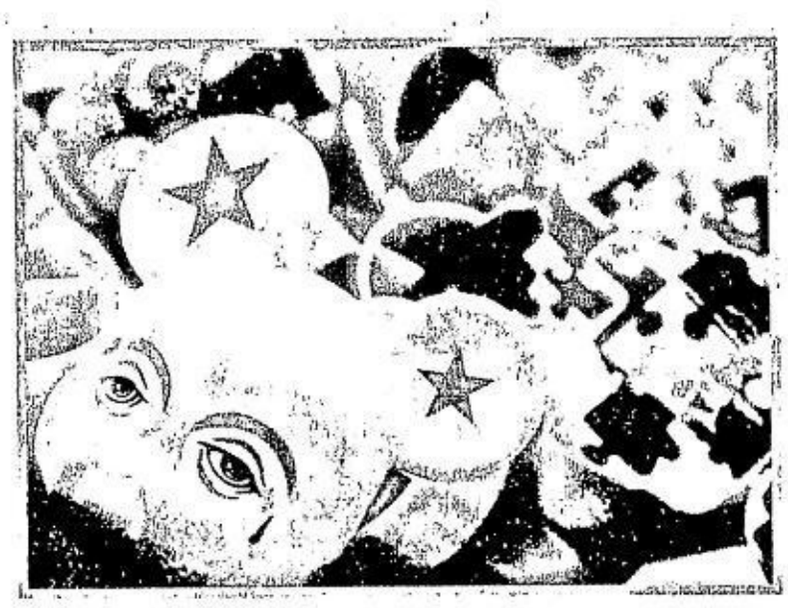
"I collect action figures of all kinds. I store them inside a warehouse that's 2,000 square feet big. My collection's still getting bigger, although I'm very selective now to collect only the best," Raymond says.

When I asked him which toys he would pick if he could only keep a handful, he told me, "It's very hard because I love all my toys. But if I had to choose, it would be the Toyer, which is my first toy, the Adidas Qee bear because I love the design, and the Qee drawing of my 6-year-old son. It's not a good drawing of a Qee, but it's my son's work. When he grows up and sees it, he'll probably be very happy."

Blood, sweat, and toys

"Since I've been collecting so many kinds of toys for years, I've learned to put a premium on toy quality," he explains. "I select the designs and the designers based on the quality of the project and the idea. We promote artists who have talent. We don't just focus on our in-house designers. We always keep an open mind for new blood. And of course, I make sure that we take care of the collectors of Toy2R—the fans who continue to buy the high-quality designer toys that we produce."



PLAYGROUND FIXTURES. Toy2R's quality of work is admirable

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Toy2R continues to grow, working with many renowned and up-and-coming artists. The company is expanding the definition of art, finding its creations in more and more concept stores, galleries, and museums worldwide. Today, Raymond's creations are sold in 19 countries, including Russia, South Africa, and the Philippines.

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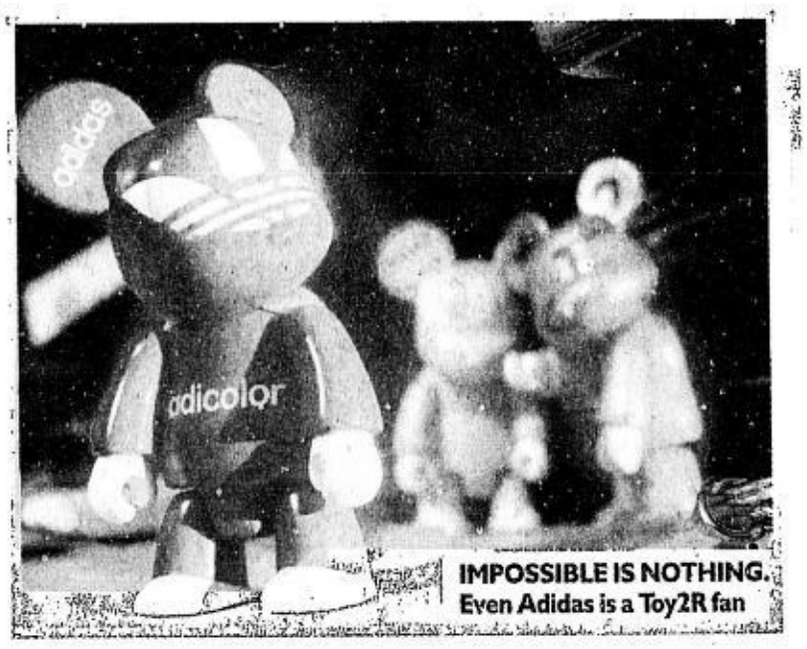

IMPOSSIBLE IS NOTHING. Even Adidas is a Toy2R fan

Gizmo at your doorstep

MOBLOCKS

By James Gabrillo

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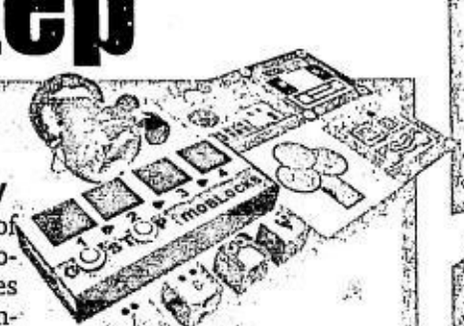
MOBLOCKS PARTY



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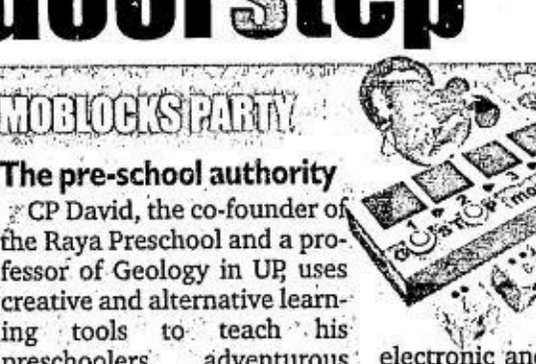

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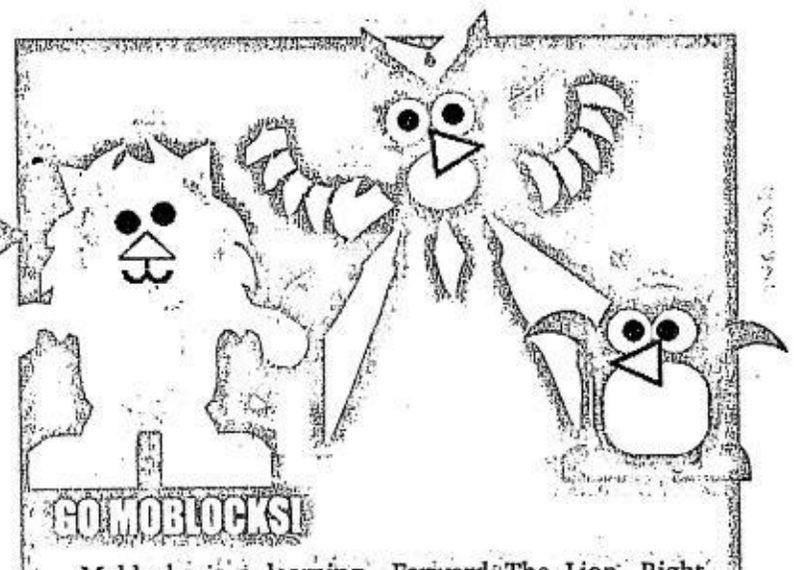

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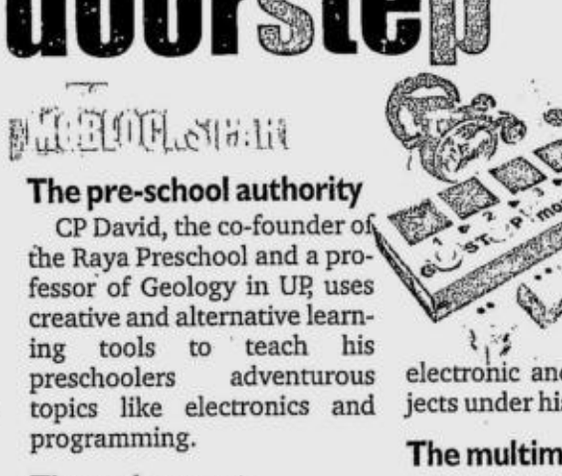

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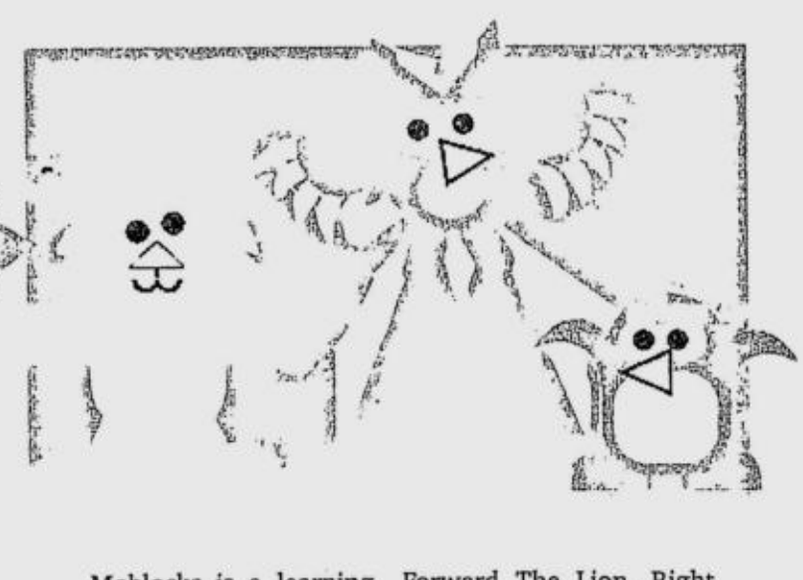

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RETAKE OF PRECEDING FRAME --

24/7 SUPER RADAR

nocturnal navigator

by Janine Cuenca-Dario and Stef Juan

FEEL the throbbing dance beat of the season at Christmas Technoball tonight at Warehouse 135 [Yakal Street, Makati City, T: 887-0526]. Usher in the first day of December with the unadulterated "dead trippy" and "funky techy" house of **DJ Steve Bamford**. Php 300 regular door charge comes with a free drink.

SEERivermaya's first major performance with their new lineup on Dec. 4 and rate just how well their new vocalist, Jayson Fernandez, can hold his own in front of a huge audience while performing back-to-back with **Vertical Horizon**. Also in the concert is special guest, American actor and standup comedian Jamie Kennedy. We're curious to discover how those performers will all come together in that one show. This is slated at 7 p.m. at the Araneta Coliseum. Call 911-5555.

SMELL the mouthwatering aroma of goodness as all your favorite restaurants at the Fort Strip, Bonifacio High Street and Serendra get together for a good cause under one roof in the NBC Tent, Fort Bonifacio, for the **Taste of Taguig 2**! On Dec. 6, 7 p.m, you can eat to your heart's content for only P1,000. You can forget calorie counting for one night without guilt, as your contribution will benefit of Light Tomorrow Foundation, a housing project of Mayor and Ms Freddie Tiñga.

TASTE the flavors of specialties from all over the world at **Spicy Fingers** Bar and Restaurant [Stall 7, G/F, Greenbelt 2, Ayala Center, Makati, T: 729-8761], a branch of the Hong Kong bar of the same name. To give Manilans a sample of the favorites at the first branch, Spicy Fingers have brought in from the former British Colony Crispy White Bait, as part of their menu as well as very good upbeat bands to entertain the diners.

Schedules are subject to change without prior notice. For more information on events, log on to www.mag24-7.com or pick up your free copy of 24/7 Nocturnal Navigator at your favorite malls, bars and restaurants. You may also text 24/7 gigs to 2851 for Globe and Sun and 2951 for Smart. Submit your schedules before Tuesday to events@mag24-7.com & mag24_7@yahoo.com for inclusion in this column.

Bring the entire family to celebrate the holidays with a bit of culture and a sense of wonder. **HEAR** the light tip tapping of ballet shoes across the stage of the CCP Main Theater when Ballet Philippines presents **Snow White** starting Dec. 5-15. Call 551-0221, 551-1003 or 832-6011 or email balletphilippines@pldtdsl.net.

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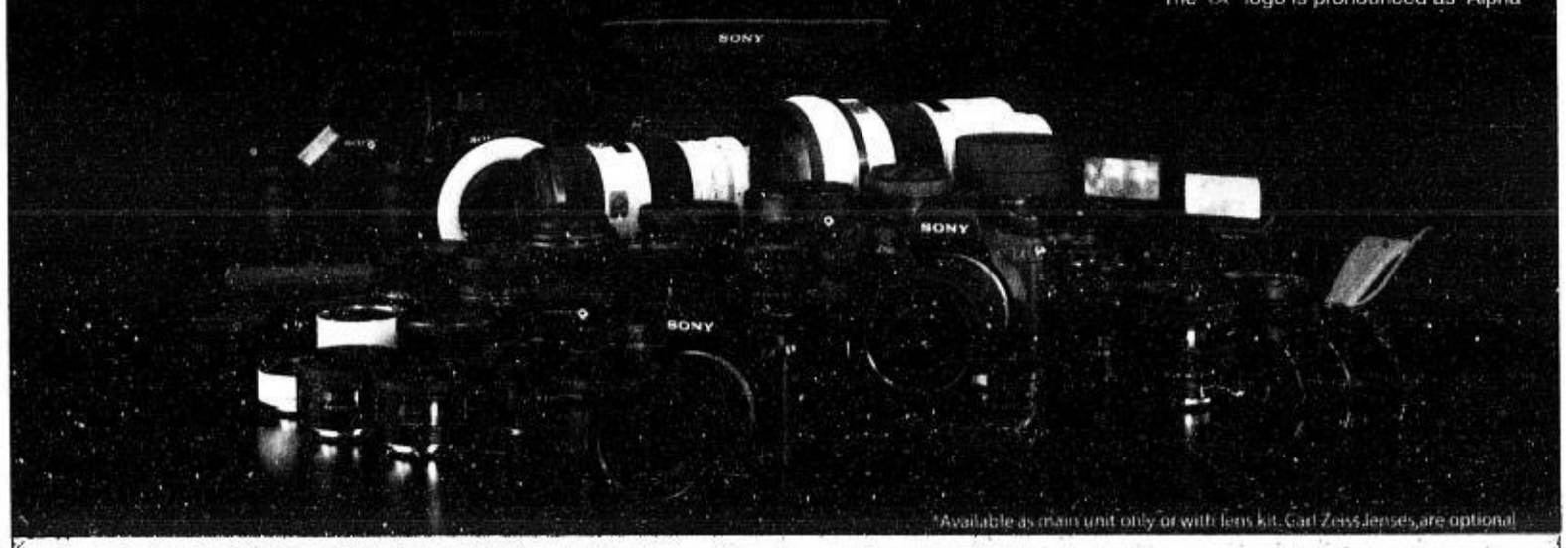

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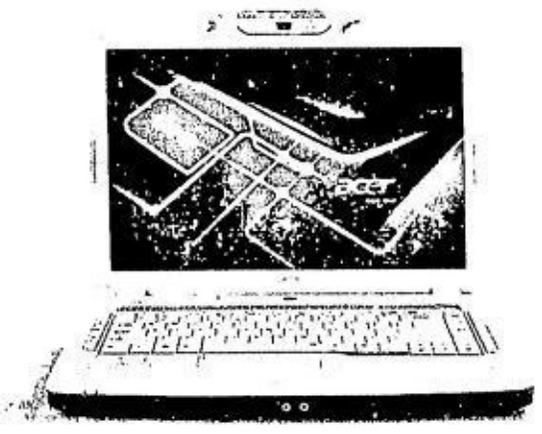

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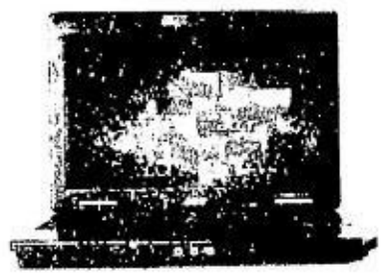

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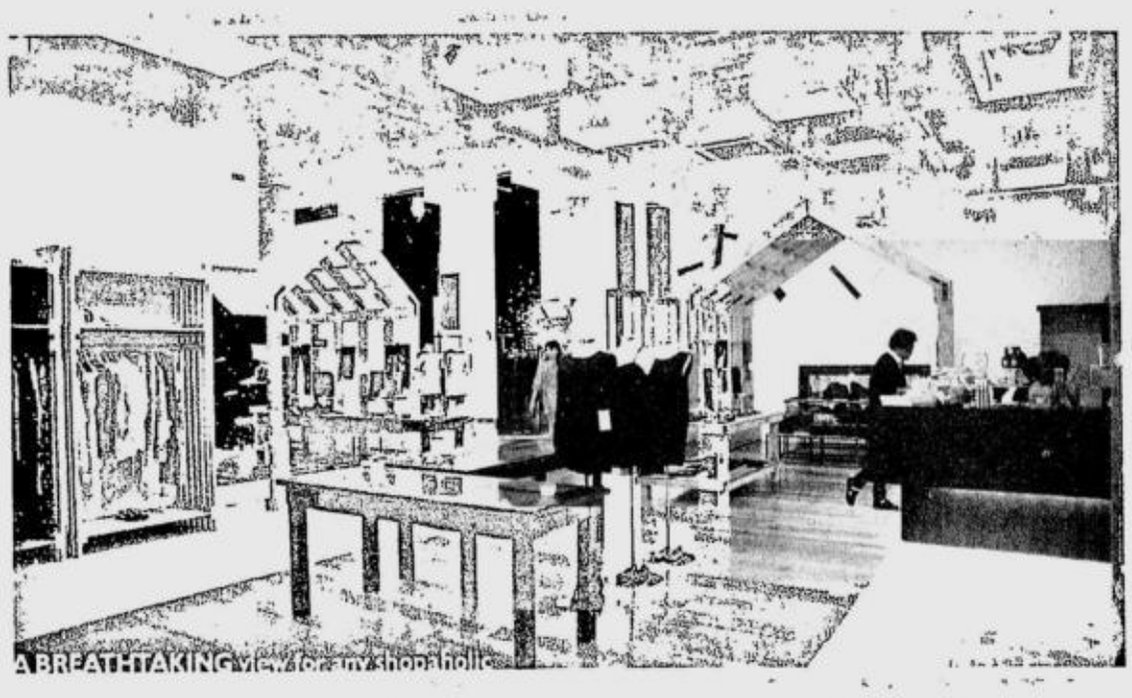
Space Invaders

Theodore's World of Wonder

The newest store on the Bonifacio block will have shopaholics jump for joy

By Juana R. Manahan
Photos by Paolo Pineda


A BREATHTAKING [illegible] interior

TOO MANY CHILDREN'S stories are written about magical lands where the imagination comes to life. Babes in Toyland, Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, The Wizard of Oz all transport kids and adults alike to a far away escape from reality. In today's fast-paced world, people are in need of a sanctuary and unfortunately a land full of candy and rivers full of chocolate are against most people's diets. Salons and spas always attempt to provide an escape from the busy city life, the only problem is that it's over the second you walk out the door.

A world of retail

I have found my new sanctuary at the top of Bonifacio High Street. Sitting in a yet to be discovered end of the newest place to stroll is Theodore's. A black brick wall façade distinguishes it from the hyper active "art installations" that clutter the high street. This is the first concept store in Manila, reminiscent of Collette in Paris and is the wonderland that has been given life by retailer Pam Gonzales. The entire concept of the store was dreamed up by Pam and was influenced by her stay in New York and is a reflection of the bits and pieces of the world that she has picked up. With the help of architect Mel La'O, Pam created a space where sleek street chic oozes out of every corner.

The industrial look of the store is softened by the rows filled with over 70 different brands of clothes. While the interior simulates an urban vibe, the detail of a green house like structure makes you feel light and airy. The entire store is built around the concept of the freedom to look at the merchandise with no pressure. Unlike other boutiques where the staff is either a bit snobby or very eager staff look over your shoulder or try to suggest what you should try on ("ma'am try *nyo 'to* sexy *ho' yan*) the extremely well-trained staff at Theodore's smile politely and magically appear to assist you at just the right moment. After spending hours at the store, I feel like I had made several friends out of the shop assistants. To soften the look, Pam added large colorful ottomans for boyfriends, fathers and other financiers to sit comfortably and wait. The staff also offers them coffee, tea or a signature Theodore's mineral water and magazines as they patiently wait.

A COZY spot in the store

Experience Theodore's

Pam has carefully planned out the store to give patrons a total experience when they come to shop. The clothing at the front of the store is a bit more edgy and serious, while the clothes toward the back are more fun and laid back. It is also in the back area that Pam has created an interactive area where artists, non-artists and creative customers can express themselves on a wall that she has dedicated solely for people to paint on. While most dressing rooms tend to be cramped, ill lit and with a stuffy temperature, dressing rooms at Theodore's are spacious and comfortable enough for you to play fashion show without having to leave the room.

One of a kind

Discerning shoppers will be in paradise as the clothes reflect Pam's impeccable style. Add to that, most clothes have very few items in different sizes, ensuring that you won't ever have to run into anyone in the same outfit. A big appeal of Theodore's is that they carry exciting new brands from overseas, perfect for younger fashion lovers. Moreover, Theodore's has an exquisite selection for men, something hard to find in Manila. The store stocks clothing that suits any type of guy—from a Hip Hop lover, to more conservative classic T-shirt and polo types to the flamboyant silver ensemble. The store is also fashion forward by reintroducing classic footwear brands Delman's and Superga back into the Philippine retail scene. There is something for everyone at Theodore's with the price ranging from little trinkets, books lomo camera's and cd's, to one of a kind sunglasses and accessories, to the higher end jackets made from vintage Chanel silk. Hours can be spent exploring the stores different facets.

After strolling the entire length of the beautiful High Street, filled with the commercial stresses and everyday grind, it's nice to feel that you can escape the stress of the real world and revel in the world of Theodore's.

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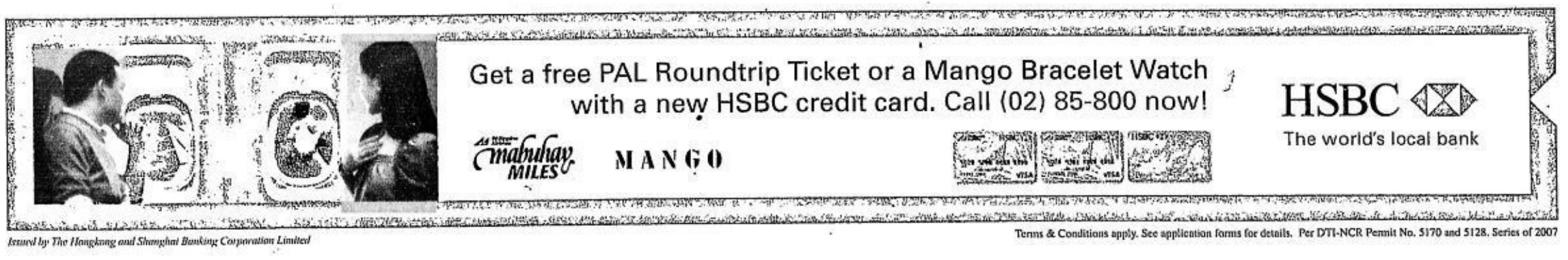

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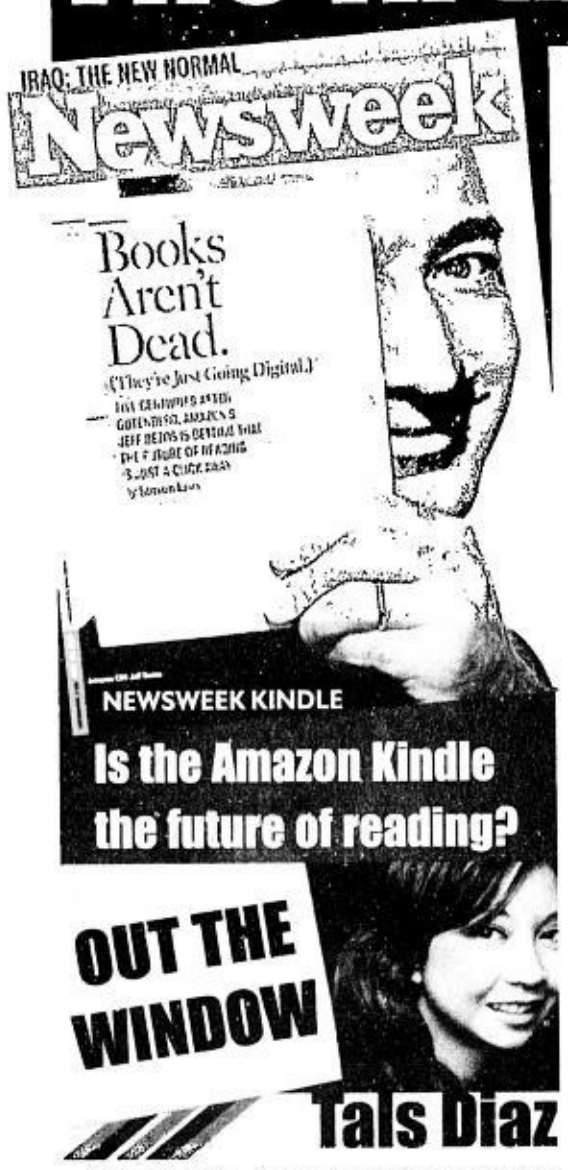
The Artist Formerly Known as Print



"Outside of a dog, a book is a man's best friend. Inside of a dog, it's too dark to read."
–Groucho Marx

I KNEW I HAD STUMBLED UPon the secret language of star-crossed booklovers when I read an affectionate scribble on the first page of a crumbling paperback. "These ideas are gifts," it read. "May you enjoy every single word of this book as much as I did." (Mental Post-it note: return book to owner.)

It was as if I had cracked open a portal back in time and into a moment left indelible by the certitude of date and slant of handwriting. The book was not mine, yet I became a part of that book's life cycle, and involved in the exchange of emotions between friends who could find a deeper understanding, as only bibliophiles can, in the spaces between lines and words, and fingers touching paper.

So when I recently saw the breaking news on Amazon.com about "the future of reading" as promised by a digital device, I could not help but wonder if we are once again on the verge of forgetting such fragile things, like handwritten letters that were convicted to obsolescence since the electronic coup.

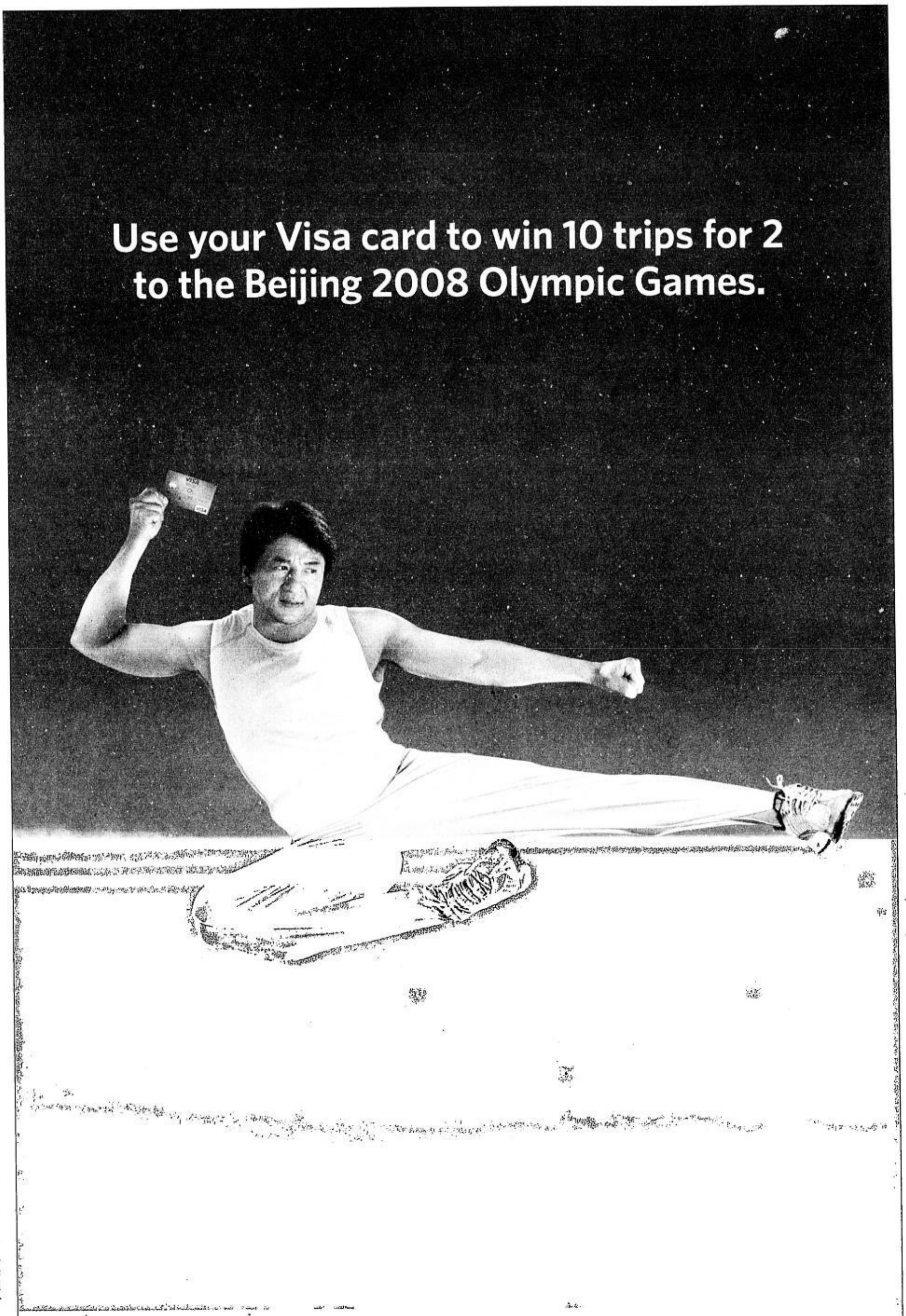
The device is called the Amazon Kindle, a wireless, portable reading machine that gives the user access to more than 90,000 books. Yet more than just an e-Book, it also gives a daily fix of one's favorite blogs, newspapers and magazines. The secret is in the screen—Kindle's display is constructed out of a kind of electronic ink that mimics the qualities of print, making the text as sharp and clear. Amazon promises that the reader would forget it was something other than print.

Wireless Wonder

The Kindle's positive attributes seem airtight. It's wireless, needs no sync-ing with a laptop, and unlike WiFi, it uses the same high-speed data network as advanced cell phones—so you don't even need to look for a hotspot.

"Whether you're in the bed or the train," so the chirpy product description continued, "Kindle lets you think of a book and gets it in less than a minute." If you buy a book from the online Kindle store, it is "auto-delivered wirelessly in less than one minute." And with more than 88,000 books available, including 100 of the New York Times bestsellers, its practicality is inarguable, thereby making it a lust-worthy object for technophiles everywhere.

Before one could even formulate a complete mental argument, Amazon had lined



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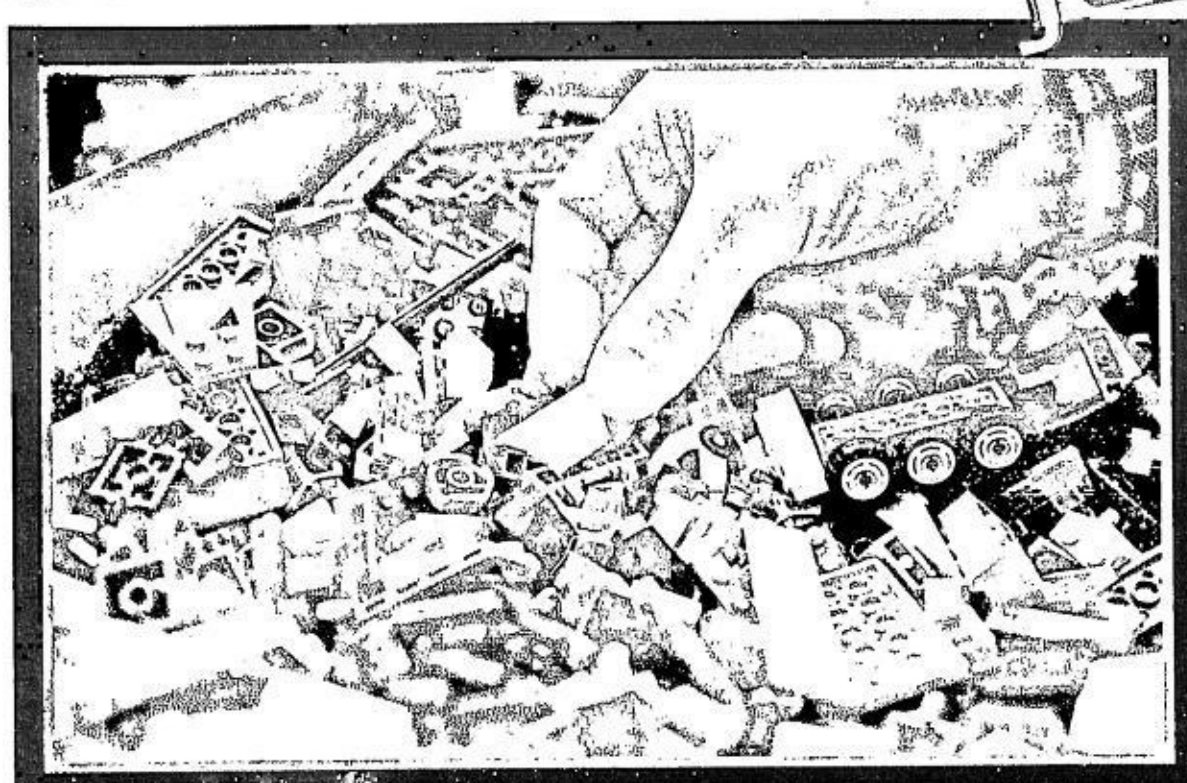


COLOR THEORY. Lego elements in full color.

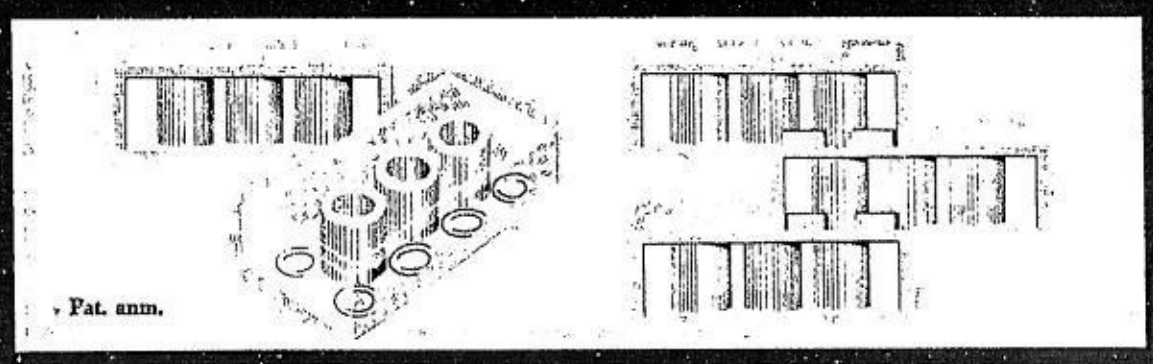
DESIGN DUTY. A designer at work in Denmark.

Lego of me

Toy giant Lego turned 75 this year, but the creator of the iconic connecting brick isn't ready for retirement

LOST IN TRANSIT

Paolo R. Reyes



RETRO SPECS. The blueprint of the original brick in 1958.

IN THE BLINK OF AN eye, they've become the Senior Citizen Card-carrying members of Toyland.

Pushing 50, platinum blonde babe Barbie is now a middle-aged beauty queen, unhappily married to her sexually ambiguous beau, Ken. At 65, decorated foot soldier G.I. Joe is now a wheelchair-bound war veteran, suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder.

But even after blowing out 75 candles during its birthday bash in Billund, Denmark last August, low-key toymaker Lego—which built its empire on primary colored connecting bricks—has managed to bridge the generation gap, minus the plastic surgery.

Ironically, story of Lego began not with plastic, but with wood. It was 1932, and the world was in the grip of an economic depression. A Danish carpenter named Ole Kirk Christiansen found himself in dire financial straits. Without any houses to build, he decided to make wooden toys. Two years later, his fledgling enterprise became a flourishing business. He called the company Lego, an abbreviation of the Danish words "leg godt," meaning "play well."

GREAT DANES. Three generations of Christiansens, the founders of Lego

Perhaps as a foreshadowing of the future, Christiansen was quite unaware that, in Latin, the word actually meant "I put together."

915,103,765 possibilities

Now a generation and some 190 billion plastic bricks later, Lego is the fifth largest toy manufacturer in the world. The founder's grandson, Kjeld Kirk Christiansen, is the 205th richest person in the planet, worth a sweet $2.5 billion according to Forbes.

At the start of the 21st century, the humble Lego brick was named the "Toy of the Century"—twice. First by the trend-setting folks at Fortune magazine, and later by the British Association of Toy Retailers, where it beat out longtime archrivals Teddy Bear and Barbie.

Launched in 1958, the interlocking Lego brick was part of the company's revolutionary "System of Play" concept, which emphasized the importance of learning through play. Consistency has been the key. The bricks produced today can interlock with those produced back in the 1950s. They can be combined to create anything from a 21-piece Bionicle action figure to the 3,449-piece Death Star straight out of "Star Wars."

There are, in fact, 915,103,765 possible ways to arrange six eight-stud Lego bricks of the same color. (It was originally 102,981,500, but a computer-savvy mathematics professor calculated that the figure was too low, and quickly corrected the discrepancy.) Laid end to end, the number of bricks sold in a year would reach more than five times round the world.

Trouble in Toyland

But it wasn't always milk and cookies in Toyland.

Three years ago, the bricks didn't seem to stack up anymore. Lego announced the biggest loss in its history. The company sacked its CEO, their Legoland amusement parks in California and the UK were sold, hundreds of workers were laid off, and sales stagnated.

Those dark days raised a perennially evaded question: Could an archetypally traditional toy survive a fad-driven market that was moving faster than ever?

Lego became over-dependent on its blockbuster licenses with "Harry Potter" and "Star Wars," and lost sight of its most critical target group: small children.

But after rethinking their strategy, the company began to pick up the pieces after the unexpected crash. Their back-to-basics strategy revived classic concepts and gave them a new twist. Electronic-enhanced sub-brands like Lego Technic and Mindstorms were given more prominence, and their phased-out Duplo line for toddlers was eventually relaunched.

All work, all play

These days, Lego is back on track, and legophelia is alive and kicking. Although the company headquarters are still in based in Billund, they now have so-called "listening posts" in Munich, Barcelona, LA, and Tokyo in order to monitor the latest trends. And at the heart of their creative core are 120 designers representing 15 different nationalities, most of whom have trained in design or art schools around world.

The signs are promising. Last year, Toys 'R' Us Japan hailed Lego as their "Vendor of the Year," while their nationwide Master Builder search has encouraged adult legophiles in the US to rediscover their childhood passions by taking 10 pounds of bricks, creating a spur-of-the-moment sculpture, and literally assembling their dream job: a full-time position at Legoland in Carlsbad, California.

For many of these diehard AFOLs (Adult Fans of Lego), cobbling together 4,000 plastic bricks and snapping them into something spectacular isn't just child's play. Lego building, at least for these self-described "blockheads," is both an art and a science; an artistic pursuit that clicks well with their creative side.

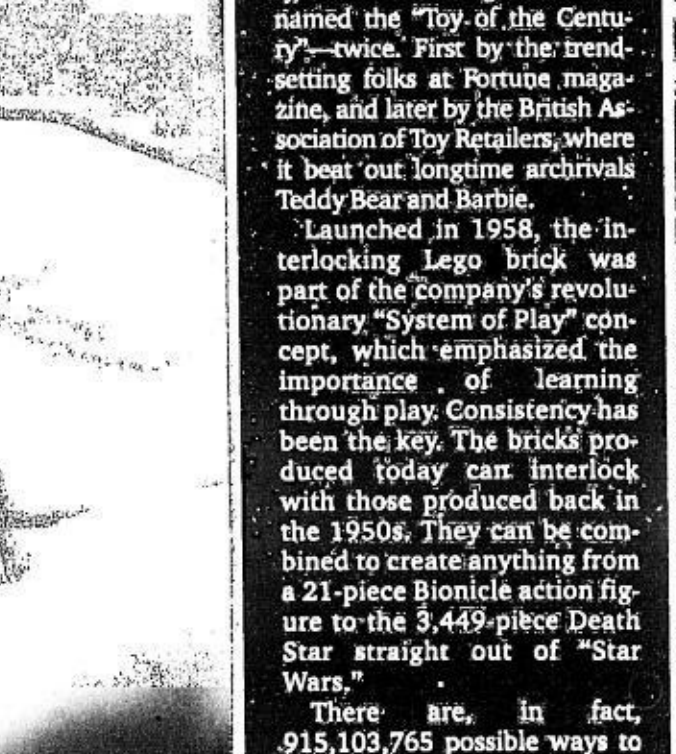
Hunched over a mound of multicolored blocks, their hands wrist-deep in a bucket of red rectangles and canary-yellow cubes, they look like starry-eyed children engrossed in a great summer project.

Maybe that's the most enduring lure of Lego. Child's play is an ever-fickle world, and consumer electronics will always remain the toughest competitor of traditional toys. But the act of creation, in itself, will never fall out of fashion. Even for the geeks who never grow up.

PLAY WELL. In Latin, "lego" means "I put together."

STACKED UP. Storage facilities in Billund.

ROBO-TECH. Toying around with the Mindstorm.



FUN FACTORY. An assembly line of Lego minifigures

Habagat Carrera 2007

Text and photos by Andy Maluche

I HAD NO IDEA WHAT I WAS GETting myself into when I got an invitation to go down to Siargao to cover an adventure race. Being the easy going, happy-go-lucky guy that I am, I figured I'd find out soon enough.

What can go wrong spending four days on a small tropical island with beautiful beaches, right? The moment I did find out what I was getting into was when I noticed that the 10 people I shared a room with in Surigao City all had sleeping mats, flashlights, rain coats, canned fish and all the kind of stuff you usually don't associate with an easy weekend at the beach in a cozy hotel. I had none of those things. Somebody had finally explained the whole thing to me which didn't make me feel any better.

"You mean, those guys run, bike, swim, kayak, climb and hike nonstop for 300 kilometers through jungles, hills and from island to island over a period of four days—nonstop, without sleeping?" The image of me sitting on the beach at sunset with a cold beer in my hand slowly dissolved in front of my eyes like a fancy cinematic trick. Once the 14 teams composed of four mates each consolidated at the start line in Surigao CIty the initial shock and disbelief had slowly transformed into curiosity. We were loaded into an old open-air ambulance and to the sound of the starting shot echoing through the streets of Surigao we chased those guys on their bikes like the madman on an old ambulance that we were. Soon we left them behind and arrived at a pier where we were supposed to wait for them. I got real comfortable not expecting the bikers to arrive anytime soon. After all we just drove in a car for one and a half hours. It will take them at least ... wait, what was that? Damn, the first team had already arrived! I barely had enough time to dig out my camera when one team after another kept rushing by me.

From then on it was a three-day desperate attempt to catch up with those guys crossing oceans in the middle of the night, rappeling steep cliffs, hiking towering hills and kayaking through treacherous waters. That alone would have been easy because we were on motorbikes and bancas. But combine that with my almost religious determination to find a reliable source of cold beer at each of the 25 check points (where the teams had to register at) and it becomes a major challenge.

But with some minor set backs we succeeded. Well, not all of us. Out of the 14 teams at the start only nine made it all the way to the finishing line. The glorious winner was team Davao Eagles. First and second runner up Cebu-based Kalit-Pepsi and Kalit-Plantation Bay respectively. And of course me, who finally happily sat at the beach with a cold beer in my hand.

KINDLE blog shot

The Artist Formerly Known as Print

From page E1

up a few good testimonials, from bestselling authors nonetheless like James Patterson, Michael Lewis and Neil Gaiman, who had given their electronic ink-stained thumbs up, extolling the Kindle's no-glare, paper-like and portable virtues. Neil Gaiman in fact, during his recent visit to Manila a few days ago, was asked about his thoughts on the Kindle, and he replied that though it would never replace books, it was still the perfect reading companion while traveling.

Thanks to early adopters, the Kindle had sold out in five and a half hours. Score one for trees everywhere.

Page Against The Machine

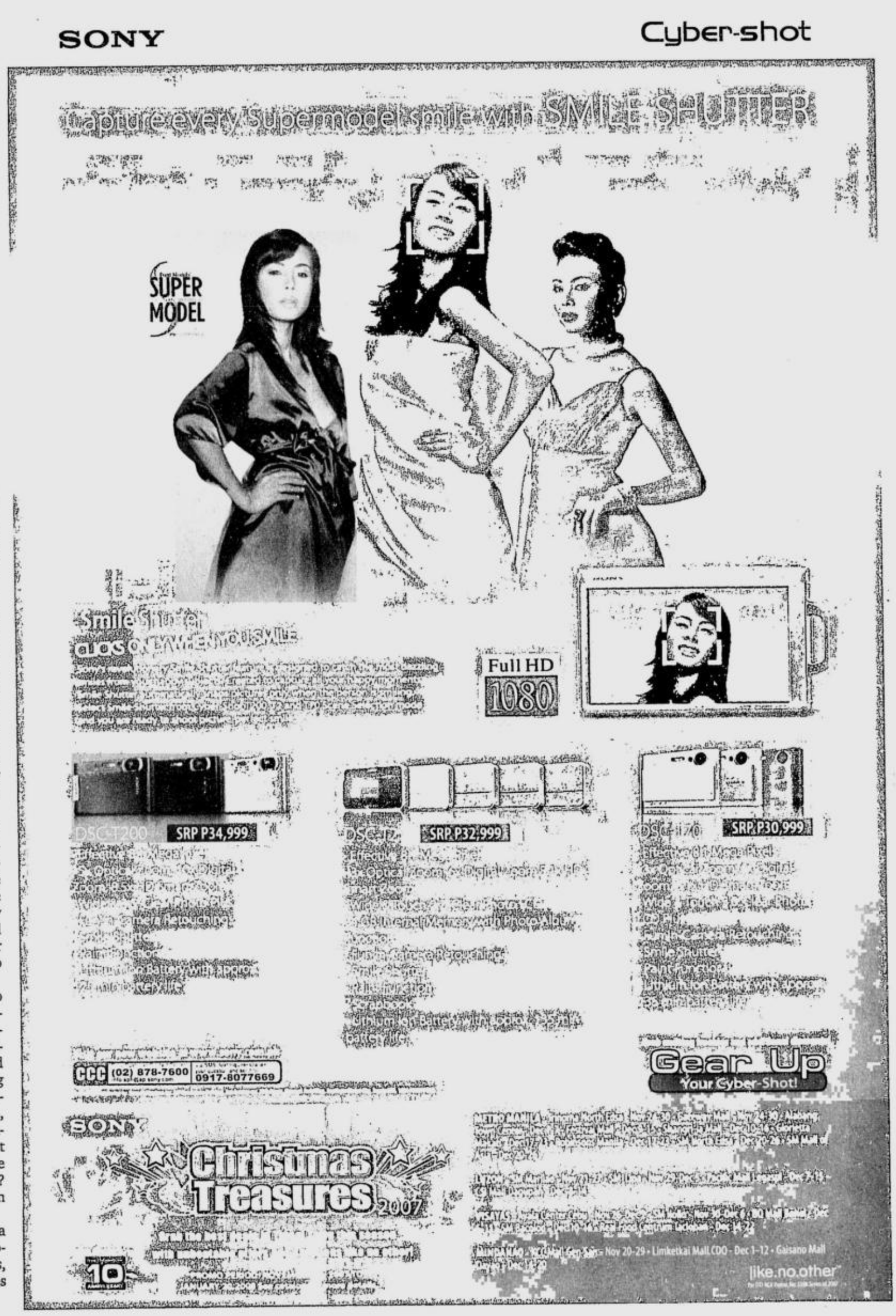
So who out there is a bit queasy about this supposed breakthrough in the world of reading? The Kindle's intro to the market has already spurred a flurry of discussions and debates on the WWW. Hardcore defenders of the page fear that the Kindle could do to the book industry what the iPod did to its next door neighbor, the music industry. Will this eventually lead to a literary Napster of sorts?

As a booklover, of course I have my reservations about this newfangled objest, perhaps in the same way that vinyl record collectors initially felt about compact disc players and iPods. For I find it unimaginable that any digital reading device could ever replace a real book. And yes, it has everything to do with the romance of it all, the kind of one-on-one romance I've known all my life—the cover artwork, the feel of the paper, the dog-eared pages, the highlights and underlines and the scribbles on the sides. It has everything to do with the experience of walking into a personal library, nurtured through the years with the memories of the parallel events happening in my own life, while going through someone else's lifetime in "Love in the Time of Cholera." Where is the art direction in being or "huddled in bed on a rainy night with a good reading machine"? It is that kind of sentimentality of bibliophiles that safeguards the sanctity of books.

But how long would this last? That sentimentality of the reader is formed because of enduring memories attached the reading experience. It is the same brand of sentimentality that aged authors are afflicted with, as they hold on to their typewriters even if there's no Spellcheck.

What is that sentimentality to this next generation, the tech-savvy bracket that is more familiar with Wikipedia than Britanica? All it would take would be a hip, long-term marketing campaign, in the name of saving the rainforests for example, to create mass desire for a pocket Kindle. Who predicted that the iPod would transform the way we listen to music today? And that happened in less than five years.

Then again, I'm no seer, just a bibliophile with a good memory. Yet in these changing times, we humans aren't the only ones with powerful memories.



Indie film makes it big

JADE Castro, Jason Abalos, Paul Jubin, Ina Feleo and Raymond Lee

THEIR FILM MAY HAVE lost to a documentary from China but the applause in the streets and audiences sent to tears in each of "Endo's" three screenings were enough to make the guys from ufo Pictures happy. Producer Raymond Lee, director Jade Castro, and "Endo's" lead stars Jason Abalos and Ina Feleo were in Nantes, France just this week for the 29th Festival des 3 Continents. It is a festival of innovative works from Africa, Latin America and Asia, and "Endo" is one of the 15 films invited to compete in the fiction and documentary category.

JASON Abalos, Ina Feleo and Jade Castro

"The audience at each of the three screenings loved it," reports Raymond from Nantes. "*At, naiyak sila! Dinig namin and mga singhutang nagaganap sa bawat* screening. *Maraming lumapit para sabihing 'j'aime beacuoup votre* film'. There was an old Swiss gentleman, his name is Paul Jubin—and he's been going to the festival since Lino Brocka's days—*sabi niya*, at each festival he has what he calls his 'coup de couer,' his personal favorite, and this year it's 'Endo.'"

"Endo" is a love story set in the service industry and tackles short-term jobs and fleeting relationships. It is produced by ufo Pictures, the same group behind the first local blockbuster indie, "Ang Pagdadalaga ni Maximo Oliveros." Since Maxi successfully toured the international festival circuit, harvesting many awards along the way, "Endo" is expected to follow its footsteps. This is "Endo's" first competition since winning this year's Special Jury Prize, Best Editing and Best Actress honors at the Cinemalaya Film Festival. Raymond Lee, the film's producer, is now in Nantes with the director Jade who also wrote the film, and the two stars, Jason Abalos and Ina Feleo. There were three screenings of the film. The first screening was sold out, even if it was at 10 a.m. on a Monday. Jason and Ina received applause from the audience when they came out to the street after the screening.

"Endo," short for "end-of-contract," is the story of young breadwinner Leo (Jason Abalos) forced to take care of his weakling father and happy-go-lucky brother by jumping from one temp job to the next. His "temporary" life is shaken when he meets and falls in love with a driven young woman (Ina Feleo) whose ambition goes beyond getting the next paycheck and a non-committal relationship.

The festival program has this short write-up about "Endo" which perhaps explains the reason why they invited the film. "'Endo' links the question of love to that of work with apparent candour. The film's strength lies in the way that it catches us off guard, asserting through separation, a power of love that encourages the loved woman to fulfill herself completely. Through the magic of the screenplay, the film releases its characters and unravels situations in song and dance. And shows the love of life at work."

"Endo" will have its commercial run in theaters January 2008.

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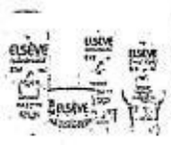

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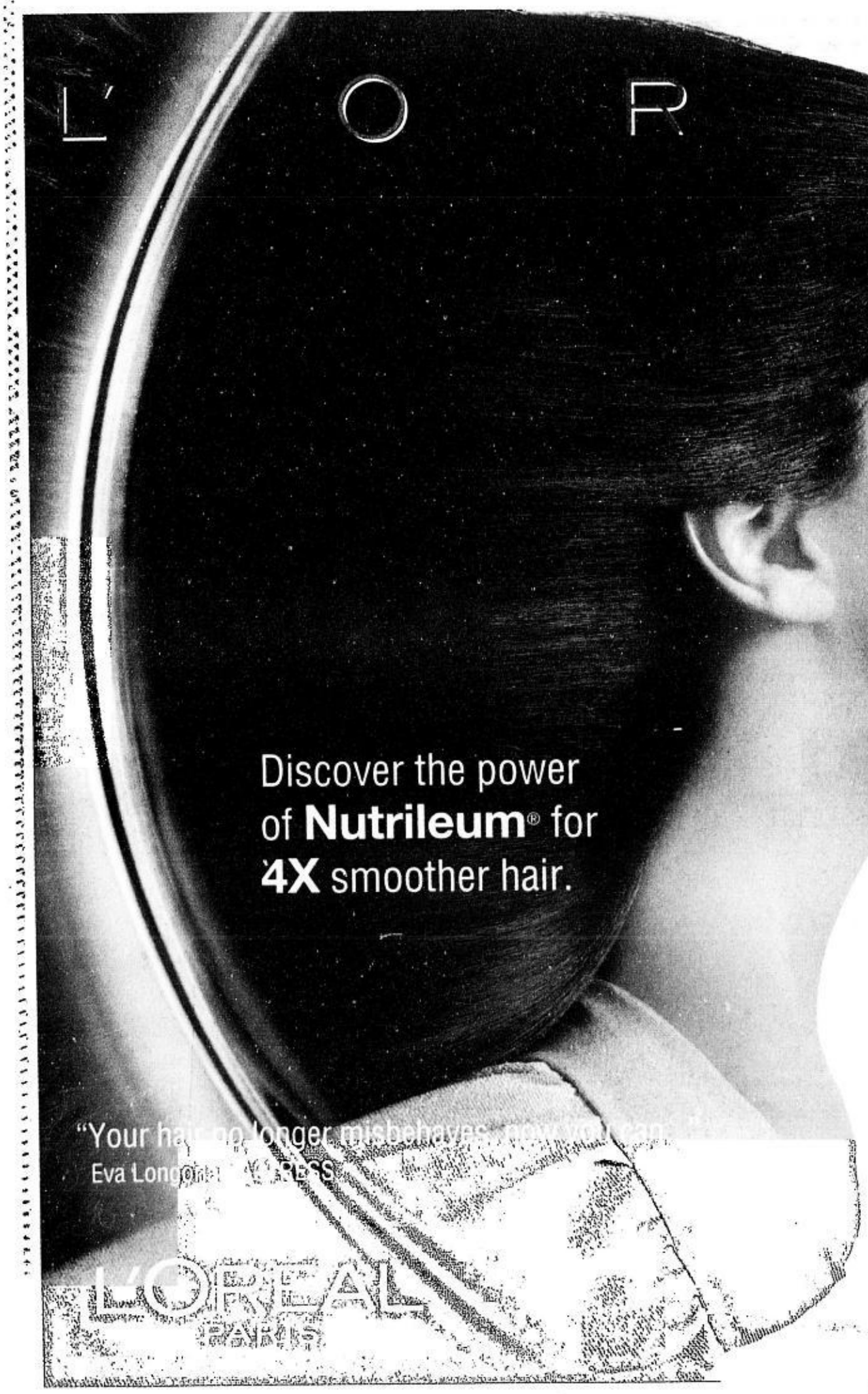

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A 62-member musically strong group gives new meaning to the famous movie line ... 'and this one time, in band camp ...'

By Katrina A. Holigores
Photos by Ivan Saneras

AS THE CHRISTMAS SEASON draws near, ask any kid what they want for Christmas and you will probably get a bright eyed answer of the newest, hottest, (and probably even noisiest) toy on the shelves that year. Most people comment that to keep the kids entertained, their playthings have to become so sophisticated that some of their parents can't even them figure out. But like any fad, even superduper model XYZ will also become outdated and perhaps thrown into a shelf only to reappear during a garage or clearing out sale.

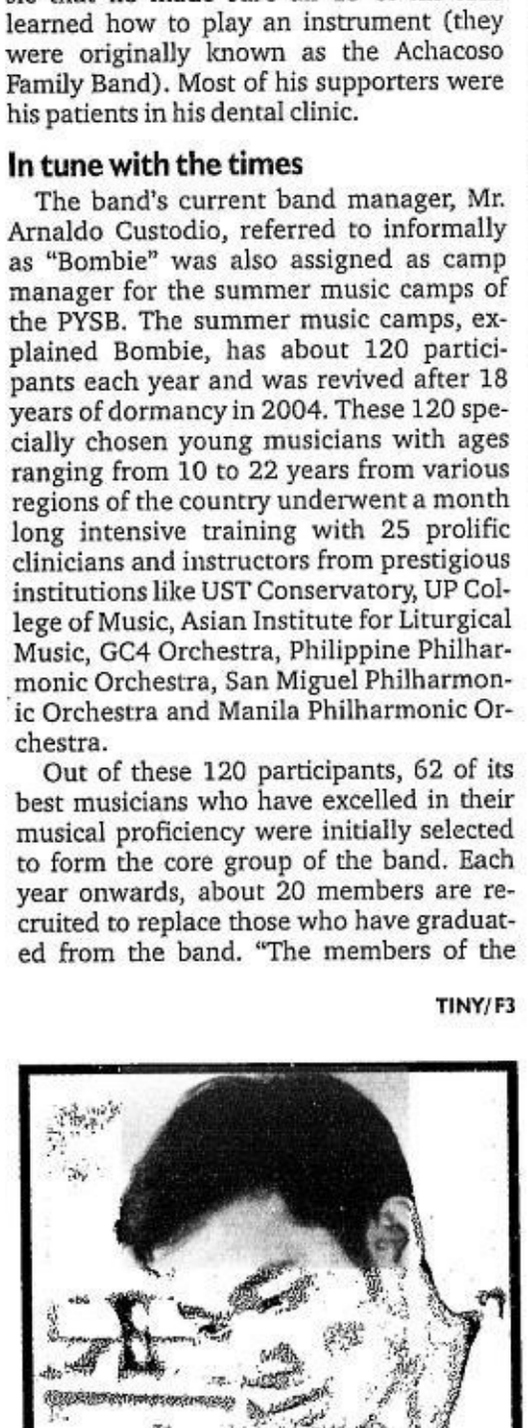
This holiday season takes a look at a different bunch of kids who do something different during their playtime, instead of toys or a Wii, they play with instruments, musical instruments. The Philippine Youth Symphonic Band (PYSB) was formally launched in 1979 and was founded by Dr. Rufino Achacoso. Dr. Achacoso who was a dentist by profession was so passionate about music that he made sure all 13 of his kids learned how to play an instrument (they were originally known as the Achacoso Family Band). Most of his supporters were his patients in his dental clinic.

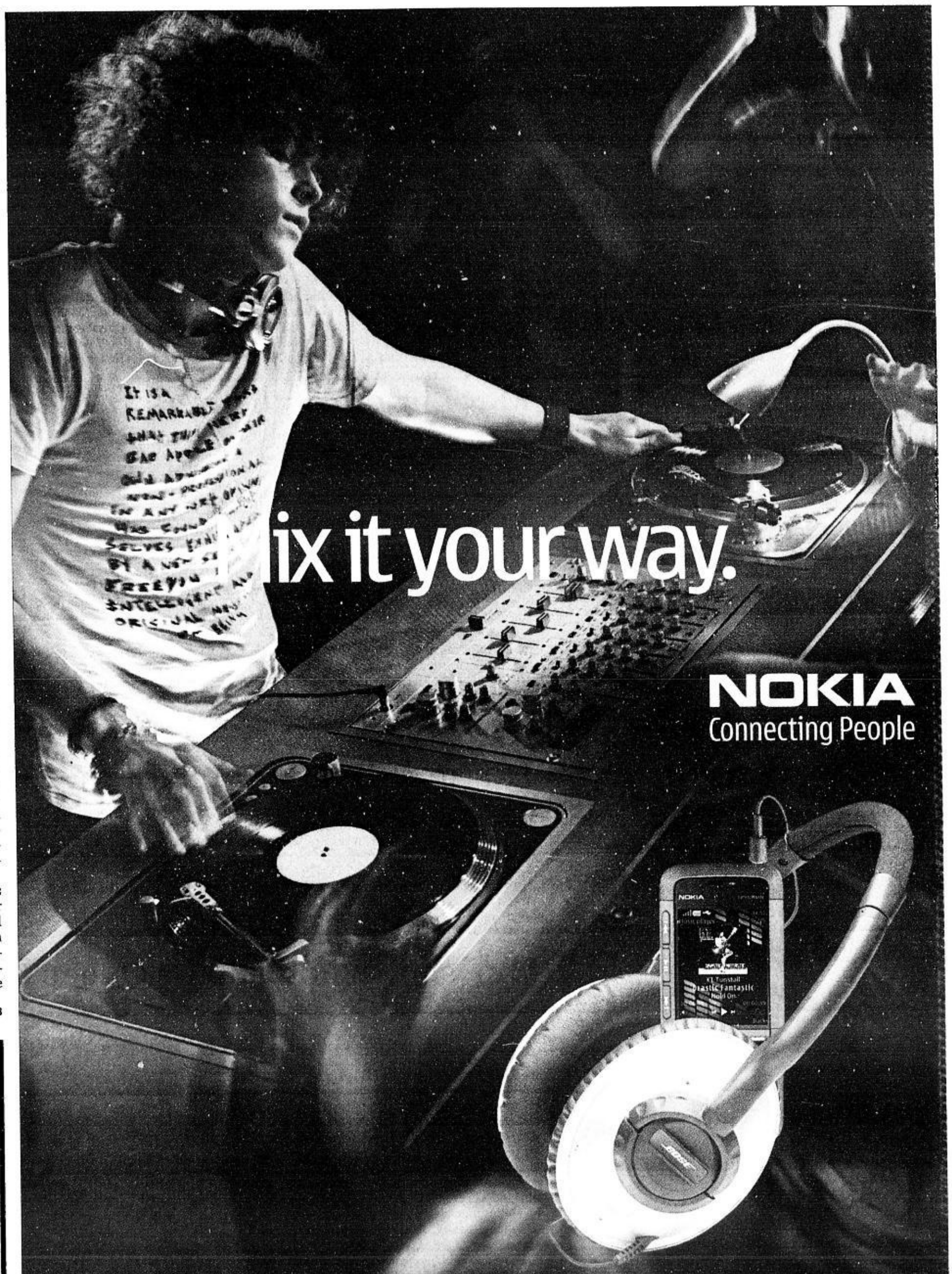
In tune with the times

The band's current band manager, Mr. Arnaldo Custodio, referred to informally as "Bombie" was also assigned as camp manager for the summer music camps of the PYSB. The summer music camps, explained Bombie, has about 120 participants each year and was revived after 18 years of dormancy in 2004. These 120 specially chosen young musicians with ages ranging from 10 to 22 years from various regions of the country underwent a month long intensive training with 25 prolific clinicians and instructors from prestigious institutions like UST Conservatory, UP College of Music, Asian Institute for Liturgical Music, GC4 Orchestra, Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra, San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra and Manila Philharmonic Orchestra.

Out of these 120 participants, 62 of its best musicians who have excelled in their musical proficiency were initially selected to form the core group of the band. Each year onwards, about 20 members are recruited to replace those who have graduated from the band. "The members of the

TINY/F3





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A weekly directory of the country's best establishments

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Goodie house classics and other Holiday surprises at The Heritage Hotel

As the Holiday rush nears, send your holiday gift-giving anxieties to the shredders, The Heritage Hotel Manila is just around the corner, a phone call away and even just a click away to provide you with a one-stop Santa's Yuletide shop for sharing good tidings with ease and aplomb.

Start ticking off gifts for loved ones who love palate-pleasers such a Gingerbread House, English Fruit Cake, Christmas-themed chocolates, yuletide cookies and other Goodie House Classics available at Santa's walk-in Holiday Cottage, Hotel Lobby.

Then why not make this season more memorable with an intimate yuletide lunch or dinner with family and friends at the Riviera Café's lunch/dinner buffet until Jan. 6, 2008, Feast of the Three Kings. Fulfill gastronomic merriment as you indulge in the stuffed roast turkey served with cranberry sauce, honey glazed ham and roast rib eye with red wine sauce, amongst a myriad of international delights, made more tempting with a cornucopia of Santa's favorite sweets

Last and most important on your holiday list is the *aguinaldo* reserved for your godchildren, after all Holidays are especially meant for tykes. Take them to a Christmas Party during lunch (11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.) on Dec. 9 and 16 where they could have the ultimate in fun as they listen to Tin-tin Bersola, media personality and children's book author together with the Heritage Hotel's very own versatile Aunt Yahu animating magical creatures in a storytelling just for kids.

The little ones can also avail of their favorite book of Tin-tin and get a personalized dedication in the book-signing portion. Moreover, your little bundles of joy could giggle and wiggle in their newly acquired face painting of a well-loved cartoon character or animal; play games aplenty and win loads of goodies for only P1088.00* for adults and P688.00* for kids 12 years old and below.

Don't miss Riviera Café's yuletide indulgence for your stress-free holiday gift-giving that melts the heart of all those you hold near and dear. For inquiries and dining reservations, call The Heritage Hotel Manila at 854-8888 or e-mail foodbev@heritagehotelmanila.com. The Heritage Hotel Manila is managed by the Millennium Hotels and Resorts.

Starbucks passes the cheer to the Filipino children

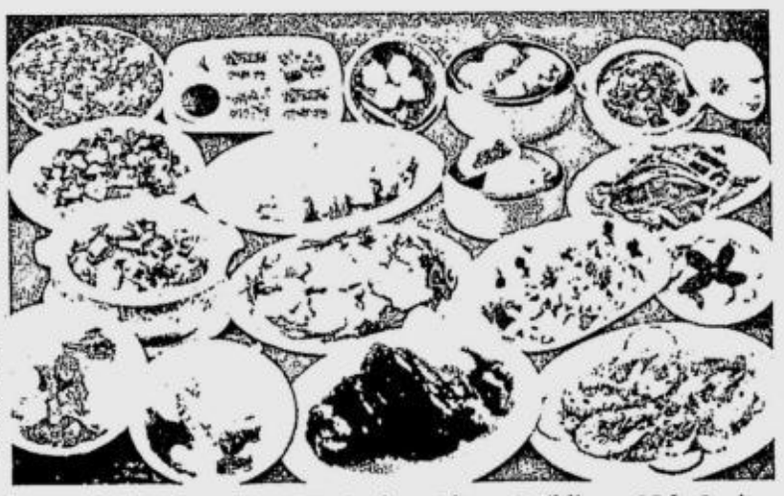
This season, join us in sharing holiday cheer with Filipino children through the Starbucks Book Drive. These books can go a long way in putting sweeter smiles in their faces, a tender glint in their eyes and a better motivation to open themselves to a world of discovering and learning.

In celebration of 10 years in the Philippines, Starbucks aims to raise 10,000 children's books to further literacy among young Filipino children. The Starbucks book drive has been a core Christmas activity at Starbucks since 2006.

"We've always been enthusiastic about the book drive, but this year is extraordinary as we aim for 10,000 books for children. All Starbucks partners (employees) are very excited to contribute to the drive and we'd also like to encourage everyone to join us in this initiative, says Ding Bustaliño, Starbucks marketing manager.

These books will go to the children of Bacoor, and Amadeo in Cavite, Pediatric Units of the Philippine General Hospital and Philippine Orthopedic Center in NCR, Bacolor in Pampanga, Biri in Samar and some parts of Benguet province through the assistance of KIDS Foundation as one of our partners this year. These books, either used or unused, can be placed in "book drive boxes" found in all Starbucks stores across the country.

Mey Lin Jupiter delivers



Mey Lin's Pot & Noodle House branch at Jupiter Street delivers traditional hand-pulled noodles and other authentic Chinese dishes right at your doorstep or in your workplace within the Makati area.

Beat the traffic hustle or your hectic work schedule without leaving the office. A sumptuous lunch or dinner is simply just a phone call away. Call 899-6688 or 899-8999, order your favorites and pretty soon fast and courteous Mey Lin riders will be there at your place with the delicious and piping hot Chinese fare of your choice.

Enjoy scrumptiously filling Bento Box meals consisting of one or two main courses, a vegetable dish and rice for as low as P158+ to P198+ per box (min. 3 orders per kind).

Savor truly authentic Chinese Specialties cooked home-style such as the all-time favorite Pata Tim w/ Cuapao, well-liked seafood specials like the Squid with Special Sauce, Steamed Fish Fillet or Crispy Salted Shrimps. With more than a hundred items of noodles, dimsum, meat, seafood, vegetables, appetizers and rice toppings, you will never run out of choices for lunch or dinner.

Mey Lin Jupiter Delivery Service is available seven days a week from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. with a minimum delivery purchase of P500, limited within Makati City only. Or you may call 899-6688 and 899-8999 for take-out orders for pick-up at the branch located at the G/F Jupiter Place Building, 136 Jupiter Street, Bel-Air, Makati City. Also visit the other Mey Lin branches at SM-Megamall Level 4 Building A, SM-Manila Basement Level, SM-Mall of Asia North Parking Building beside Hypermart and at Mey Lin Adriatico at 1717 Adriatico Street, Malate, Manila.

Home at Hyatt Hotel for the Holidays

There's no need to fly too far or drive too long to enjoy a relaxing Christmas getaway. Hyatt Hotel and Casino Manila offers a variety of recreational and leisure activities, including the largest casino gaming facility in town, relaxing and rejuvenating Spa treatments, and a fitness center featuring a 35 m lap pool, a children's pool and an outdoor whirlpool.

For this holiday season, make your celebration special by booking into any of Hyatt's elegantly designed guestrooms or suites for two nights any time between Dec. 12, 2007 and Jan. 6, 2008, and your third night is on us! Plus, indulge in a host of privileges and benefits that your family and friends will truly enjoy.

So, come home to Hyatt Hotel and Casino Manila for the holidays and take pleasure in a one-of-a-kind Christmas celebration.

For more information about the holiday room packages and promotions, call 245 1234.

Hip, stylish hotel in the Queen City of the South

A new level of excitement takes place at the Cebu Parklane International Hotel. Located at the heart of Cebu's premier shopping and business neighborhood, The Parklane is an ideal address for business and pleasure.

The Parklane commenced its operation on July 12, 2006. It has 230 elegantly furnished rooms and suites with a spectacular view of the city. Complete with state-of-the-art technology and superb amenities, each guest room is equipped with individually controlled air-conditioning, private bath tub and shower, cable television, broadband Internet access, mini-bar, NDD/IDD telephone, safety deposit box, hair dryer and coffee and tea-making facility.

The main lobby is spacious and well-lit with its custom-designed glass curtains and elegant chandeliers. The Bean Date serves coffee and great desserts in a relaxing nook at the lobby. The Muze Bar is a sassy wine and cigar lounge that pulsates with nightly live music. Manuel's Restaurant serves a wide variety of sumptuous local and international dishes and the Cebuano favorite *lechon*. Basil's Pool Bar and Restaurant serves delicious grills and fresh seafood

amid the picturesque view of the Cebu Business Park.

The hotel also has basement and valet parking, swimming pool and Jacuzzi and gym for use of guests.

The Parklane boasts of six banquet halls ideal for meetings, corporate events and private parties. The hotel's catering team provides the best breakfast, lunch and dinner menus suited to the discriminating tastes of the guests.

The hotel is owned and operated by Five Power Venture Development Corp, which is also its first hotel property. For inquiries and reservations, call its Manila sales office at 812-9984 or (032) 411-7000 in Cebu.

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Tiny tunes, big band

From page F1

PYSB come from a varied cross section of society, but it's mainly because of their talent that we choose them to come onboard."

In another interview Irene M. Araneta who is the chair of The Young Musicians Development Organization which helps support the PYSB recalls, "The rehearsals for PYSB are every Saturday, and we didn't know that these kids were actually playing and rehearsing on their own. It means a lot when a bunch of teenagers would rather spend their Saturday afternoons rehearsing classical pieces than going to the mall or lazing around!"

Indeed, malls have turned out to be a venue for the PYSB to showcase their music rather than a place to just hang around. The PYSB have also performed in private functions although they sometimes have to be "pared" down in number as not all events can accommodate a 62-member band.

Camp songs and stories

The way the music camp and participation in the PYSB has had a great impact on its youthful members. Recalls Bombie, "The summer music camp is an event where mostly young musicians converge to learn techniques, hone their talent and plan for their future."

A lot of exchanges happen not only between tutors and participants, but also among participants. Alongside with learning advanced techniques in playing their instrument, they are given a crash course on music theory, rudiments and history. It is also in camp that we learn about experiences and ideals of our young musicians. Some of them learn to play an instrument as a hobby. Since participants are auditioned for the camp, most of those who are accepted in camp happen to be serious with their being musicians and would like to use their craft as their livelihood."

In terms of stories, Bombie continues to share, "Passion is one thing, Franz Ramirez, an oboist slipped and fell causing his oboe to break in two and his tooth to chip. We thought that it was the end of his musical career. To our surprise, he came back to camp after two days with tooth and oboe repaired

announcing to everyone that nothing can stop him in being a full-fledged musician."

There are other members who see the future in music as a means to up their livelihood, one boy, Mark Kenney Rocas, a flutist at age 10 has already decided to become a professional musician, while another one, Bien Acelajado, a trumpet player declared that music will be his means in uplifting the family in a more enjoyable manner than just driving a tricycle.

Music soothes the savage beast they say, but in this case, in the hands of the young, it may be a means to also improve the world in which they live in.

To watch these kids at 'play'

PYSB Jazz Holiday

Dec. 9, 2007 (Sunday) at 5:30 p.m. and Dec. 10, 2007 (Monday) at 7:30 p.m.

Carlos P. Romulo Auditorium
RCBC Plaza, Ayala corner Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City

Interests, queries and suggestions can be coursed to Arnaldo N. Custodio at 09175400528, bombie@entisrama.com or youngmusiciansdo@yahoo.com.

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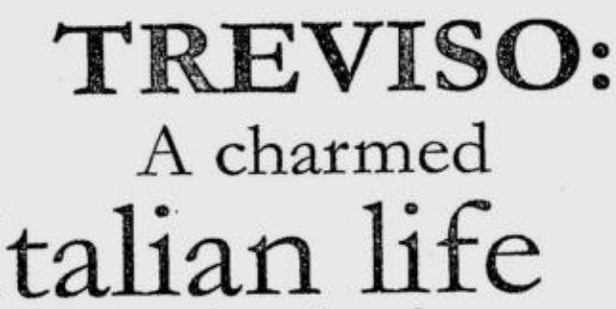

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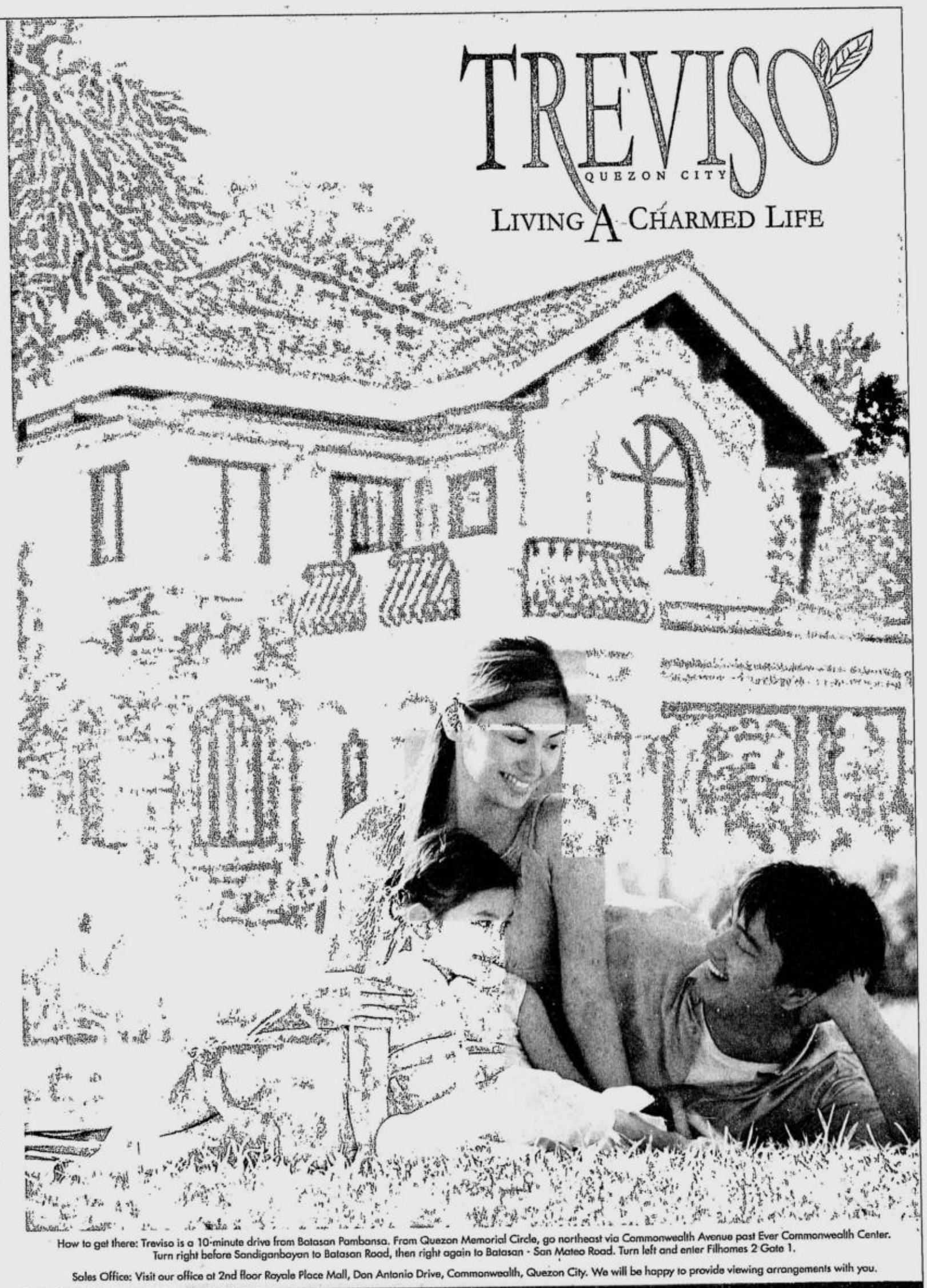

How to get there: Treviso is a 10-minute drive from Batasan Pambansa. From Quezon Memorial Circle, go northeast via Commonwealth Avenue past Ever Commonwealth Center. Turn right before Sandiganbayan to Batasan Road, then right again to Batasan - San Mateo Road. Turn left and enter Filhomes 2 Gate 1.

Sales Office: Visit our office at 2nd floor Royale Place Mall, Don Antonio Drive, Commonwealth, Quezon City. We will be happy to provide viewing arrangements with you.

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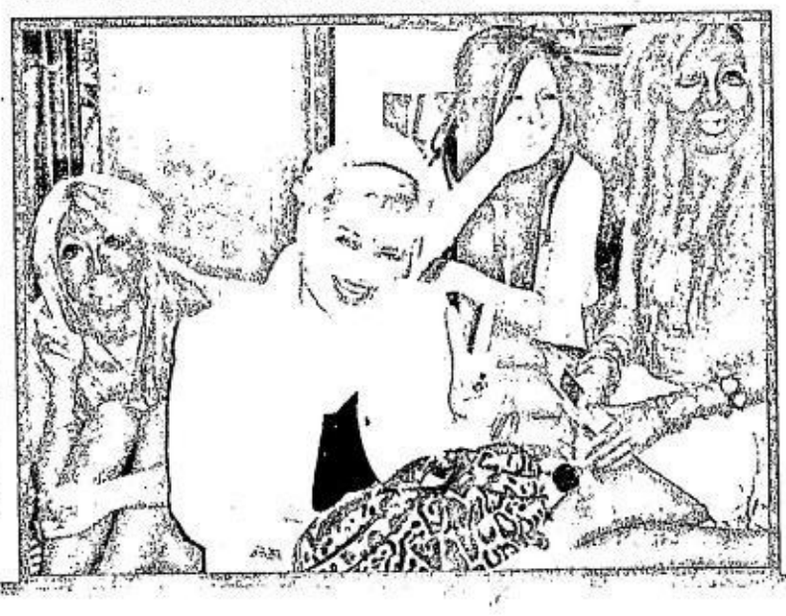
IT'S A DIFFERENT kind of reality show for Kelly Osbourne.

KELLY with her fellow waitresses in Japan



TEA TIME. Kelly found out what it was like to be a geisha.

SUPER EXCLUSIVE:

Memoirs of an Osbourne

Kelly Osbourne tries to turn Japanese in her three-episode special for Discovery Travel & Living

By Pam Pastor

KELLY OSBOURNE LIKES Japanese toilets. "I want to get one for my house," she said.

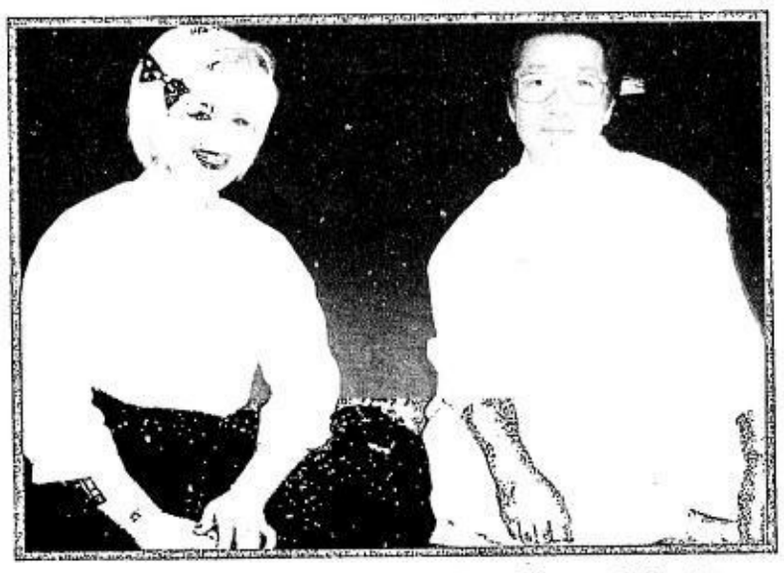
She had the chance to explore Japan and its hi-tech restrooms when she went to the country to shoot her TV special "Kelly Osbourne: Turning Japanese."

Over three-hour long episodes (that will be aired on Discovery Travel & Living on Tuesdays and Saturdays starting Dec. 4), Kelly explores both the traditional and bizarre facets of life in Japan. She takes a total plunge into Tokyo culture by taking a wide range of jobs and participating in different activities. She waitresses in a French maid's outfit, provides lovers with sex toys at a hotel, trains with a samurai, becomes a Buddhist nun, works as a teacher and joins a highly respected geisha house in Kyoto.

In this Super exclusive, she talks about what it was like to leave home for a foreign culture immersion and her quest for inner calm and peace.

What made you say yes to this project?

I love Japan and think it is such an amazing country and to be given the opportunity to really explore it from all angles, how could I say no?



IT WAS a total Japanese immersion for Ozzy Osbourne's daughter.

What was it like being away from home to film the show?

I must admit that I got very lonely because there was such a language barrier and because I couldn't speak to anyone aside from the crew (who were mostly men) and my interpreter, Yumi (who was awesome) but I just really missed my mom and dad a lot!

What was the impact of this experience on you? Did it change you in any way?

It changed me in so many ways! I learned so much about respect and patience in particular. Especially when I was learning about becoming a geisha. I went in thinking some of their tasks were ridiculous and I learned that there is a reason and purpose for things. For example, how you turn the tea cup with the prettiest design to face the person that you are giving the tea to in order to express, "You're my guest, you get the nicest cup."

What did you love the most about your Japan experience?

How much I learned and what I was able to see and experience. Not many people can say that they were let into the secret world of a geisha's life or went to a love hotel or went to see the world's biggest fish market, which was actually hard for me because I don't like fish and I was saddened by the way they ate whale and were able to pick out which whale they wanted from pictures on the wall, although those are just my beliefs.

I also loved going to see the Gold Fish show. It was one of the most amazing shows I had ever seen! I wanted to go see it a million times. I have recommended the show to all of my friends who have gone to Japan since then and they all say it was the most amazing thing they had ever seen.

What was the best part for you?

Everything was the best part for me! I loved the restaurant where men catered to women, becoming one of the first western girls to be allowed into a geisha's world, learning the art of Samurai, working in a love hotel and how spotless clean Japan is!

And the worst?

The worst part for me was missing my family and not being able to communicate with very many people during my stay since I could not speak the language. It was hard going to an interpreter and asking for things as simple as a toothbrush since I am used to doing things on my own, and not being able to do these things annoyed me because I like doing them myself.

Was working in a Tokyo love hotel interesting?

It was very interesting to say the least! I saw really crazy things going on because there were cameras in each room of the hotel and we saw everything they were doing! Also, I am a very hygienic person, so when they told me one of my jobs was to go in and clean the rooms after people left, I just couldn't do it.

CULTURE shock. Kelly in Japan

I loved the way the Love Hotel was decorated though. There was one room in particular that had a hot air balloon and on the top of that was the bed and on the bottom of it was a sex swing and the ideas that people came up with in there were very interesting!

What was it like to train to be a geisha?

That was so amazing. I learned an unbelievable amount from it. The women in there were such ladies and so respectful and absolutely beautiful. I went in there under the assumption that geishas were prostitutes and I learned that they give up their lives at only 15 years old and are only allowed to write to their parents, and give up everything in order to learn the perfection of things (the perfection of serving tea, dancing, singing, entertaining, etc).

Their outfits were so amazing as well! I thought that designer clothes were expensive, but their incredible kimonos can cost tens of thousands of pounds!

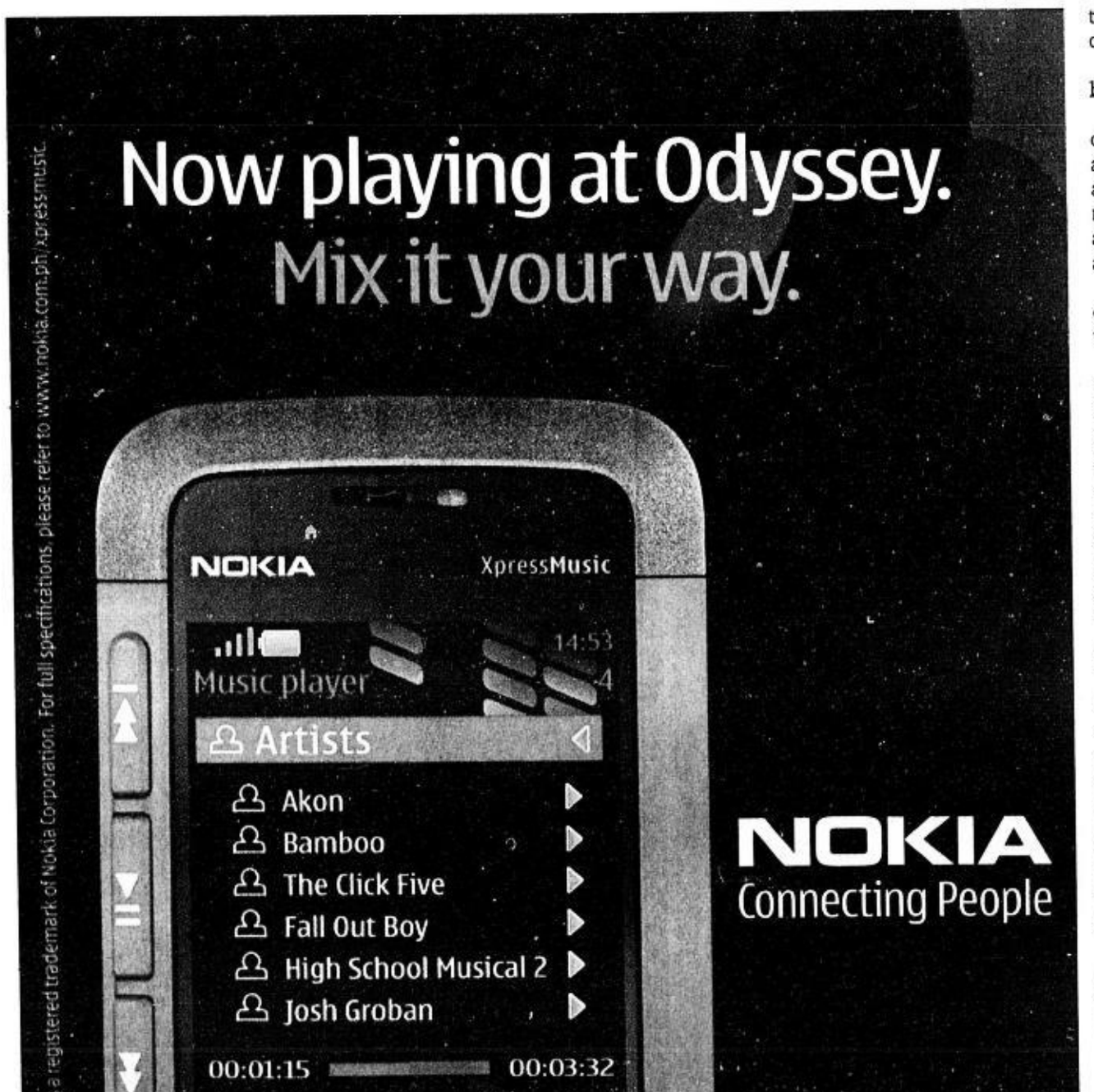
Do you have plans of going back?

Definitely. I was actually going to plan a trip in the New Year with a bunch of my friends.

Why should people watch this show?

Because it's funny! And the trip really did change me and you can see that in the show through all the fish out of water situations I was put in.

Kelly Osbourne: Turning Japanese premieres on Discovery Travel & Living on Dec. 4, 10 p.m.



Nokia and Local//:e! – making great music

ALWAYS ON THE CUSP OF innovation, electronica is a musical genre that thrives on the continued development of technology. Taking its pulse from the relentless rhythm of the clubs, the culture that surrounds it revels in the present, the pounding beat of that moment. But it's also one that's dynamic enough to listen and heed the call of the future. It's no overstatement to mention that much of these changes are brought about and helped along by how we communicate with each other.

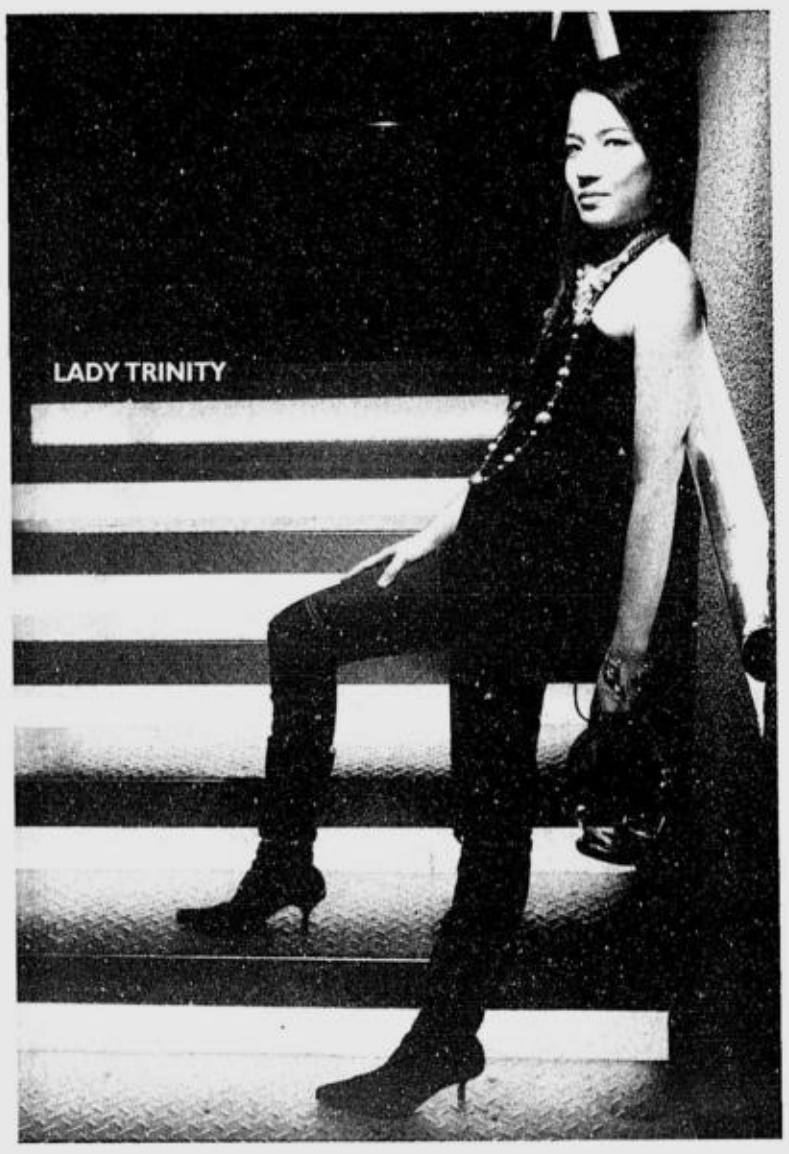
Being the world's leader in mobile technology, Nokia is about making these connections. In line with the unveiling of their new music player—the Nokia 5310 XpressMusic—Nokia launches Local//:e!'s 2nd compilation CD featuring the best in homegrown electronica by stellar talents from the scene like Funk Avy, Tribo Manila, Silverfilter and Rubber Inc.

Considered by many as one of the key pioneers in live dance music in the country, Rubber Inc. is composed of producers Noel de Brackinghe and Malek Lopez. Fresh from performing in Cologne, the duo just wrapped up recording sessions with German act, the Teichmann Brothers, recently. Lopez, a product of the Berklee College of Music, says he likes the fact that the Nokia 5310 XpressMusic offers up to 18 hours of music playback. "With an optional 4GB microSD card," he says, "the memory can hold up to 3,000 songs."

One of the finest live electronica acts in the country, Silverfilter has toured and performed all over the country. Doing gigs at various venues in Manila, Boracay and Davao—to name but a few—his versatile talents and commitment to giving his audiences a great show has earned him a considerable following. Given that music plays a big part of his life, he's particularly excited about the Nokia 5310 XpressMusic's dedicated music keys and 3.5mm AV jack so he has a wide choice of hi-fi headphones to plug in.

A veteran of the scene for several years, Funk Avy honed his chops as a DJ in clubs. Apart from spinning tech-house and techno, his sets incorporated samples and drum machines as well as turntablism to create his own blend of live electronica. His considerable talents have since garnered international acclaim. He was one of the first Filipinos to be signed by French label Fusion Recordings while his music has also been included in several compilations for FashionTV. For him, the Nokia 5310 XpressMusic iconic design is "strikingly slim and light." At only 9.9 mm thick and weighing less than 71 grams, he says it "fits comfortably in my pocket."

Nokia's launch of Local//:e's second CD is in line with Local//:e!'s goal of broadening electronica's appeal and the further development of the music scene. Collaborating with musicians such as classically trained violinist Jay Cayuca and legendary blues guitarist Jun Lopito, Local//:e! is like Nokia in encouraging these connections. And as much as electronica is inspired by technology, the Nokia 5310 XpressMusic makes mobile technology as inspiring as music.



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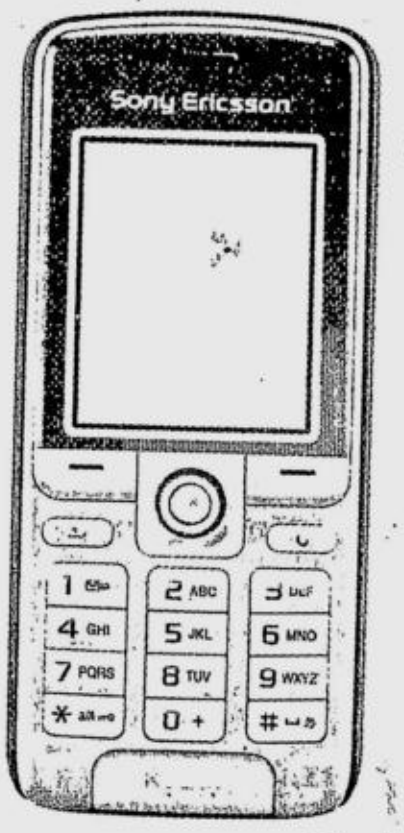

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1. **Text thess [space] reg <name/address/age/gender> (ex. Thess reg <bona sy/gold st., marikina city/27/f>).**
2. **Send to 2861.**
3. **Only one registration per mobile number will be allowed.**

To send an entry:

1. Text **thess [space] letter of answer to 2861.**

Sample question: ***According to one of the chinese zodiac legends, who among the following invited different animals to his birthday feast?*** A.Huang Ti ***B.Buddha*** C.The Jade Emperor D.The Emperor's Adviser

The answer: text **thess b, send to 2861.**

2. Send as many entries as you want, and as many answers.

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3. Prizes are transferable but not convertible to cash.

4. Prizes and winners to be published in the **INQUIRER** on **Dec. 14, 21 & 28, 2007** and on **Jan. 7, 2008.**

5. All **WOFS, PDI, SMART & WOLFPAC Mobile Inc.** Employees and their relatives up to second degree of consanguinity are not allowed to join the promo.

6. **Metro Manila** winners may claim their prizes at **World Of Feng Shui – New Manila Branch (412 – 6888 / 382 – 2180).**

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Provincial winners will receive their prizes via courier upon verification of **Wofs Philippines, Inc.**

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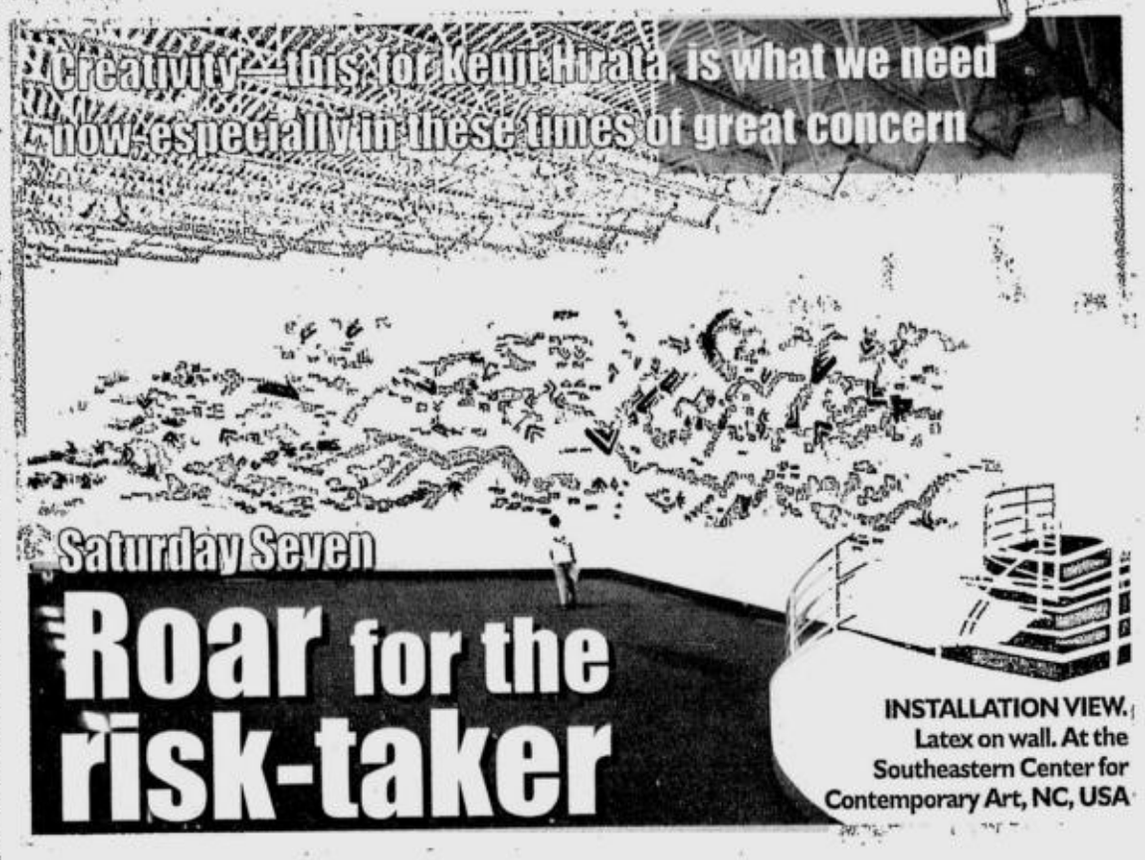
Creativity—this, for Kenji Hirata, is what we need now, especially in these times of great concern



Saturday Seven

Roar for the risk-taker

INSTALLATION VIEW. Latex on wall. At the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art, NC, USA

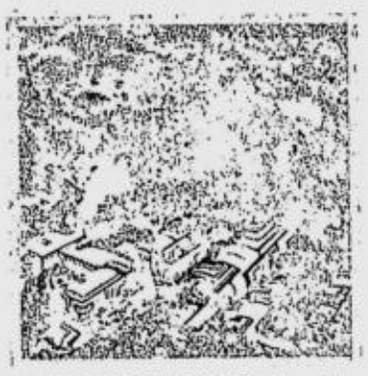
By James Gabrillo

ARTIST KENJI HIRATA knows a thing or two about risk-taking.

Born in Nagasaki, Japan, New York-based Hirata's paintings fuse the elements of fire, metal, water, soil, and wood into a multiple yet clear narrative.

Hirata is a core member of the Barnstomers, an illustrious Tokyo-New York-based artist collective. He has done large-scale public mural paintings in Tokyo, New York, Miami, and the rural town of Cameron, North Carolina, where the artist collective was founded.

When he was invited to translate his work into three-dimensional objects via digital fabrication, Hirata's two-dimensional forms turned into a coated black and white bas-relief.



COBRA'S LEFT HAND. Acrylic on canvas

There is density is in his composition but the form remains clean. His structure, which has been compared to Swiss surrealist H. R. Giger, "attempts to reveal something deep within the spirit of things." Those were Hirata's own words.

From huge multi-colored public murals to small paintings, from book illustration to film animation—Hirata has proven his openness as an artist. In 2004, he designed Absolut's Raspberri advertising campaign.

His whole collection stirs up a negotiation of identity in a world where territorial, technological, and cultural borders steadily dissipate.

Learning about unfamiliar things requires risk. For Hirata, it's about realizing that rational risk-taking is good.

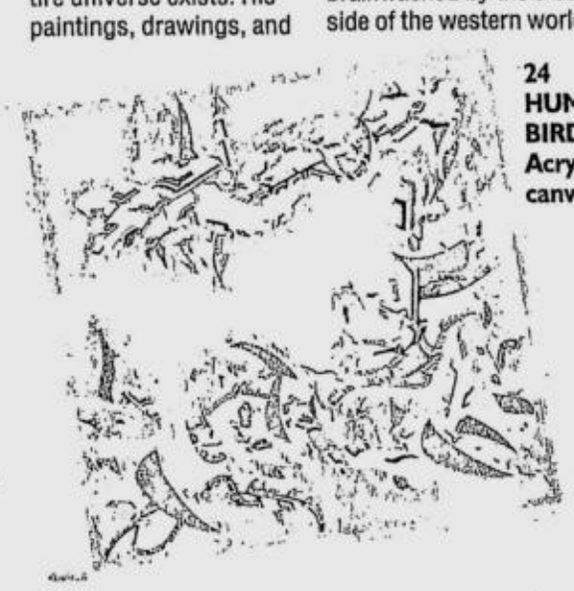
BITS AND PIECES

HIRATA'S artwork in form and color is strongly inspired by nature, billboards, futurism, and hand-painted signage in Southeast Asia. His works also have strong references to the vibrancy of Jamaican dance hall sound systems.

The theme that runs through Hirata's body of work is a story he has created, in which an entire universe exists. His paintings, drawings, and films provide glimpses into this universe.

Hirata has developed a language of icons and symbols, which take on new meaning as they are combined and recombined throughout his abstract and figurative works.

Hirata creates his work for an open mind. He intends to speak to the childlike part of the viewer that is not jaded—like the mind of a child who has never seen and has never been brainwashed by the crazy side of the western world.



24 HUMMING BIRDS. Acrylic on canvas

Seven questions

When did you decide to become an artist?

I don't think there was a moment when I decided to be an artist or something. I guess I tried to be myself. Fortunately, I'm paying the monthly house rent by being an artist. (Laughs) Thank you to all who support me!

Who/what are your influences?

Almost everything around me: Conversation with my friends, the four seasons, the movement of stars, dancing to the tune of house music at the break of dawn, and good times with my wife.

Talk about your colors.

You know, sometimes, color is like the "joker" in the card game.

What about the language and icons that you use?

A primary symbol in my artworks—a round shape or an arc—is a motion. It's like a caress—like the meaning of a hand touching something that it really loves.

Tell us a memory from your studio.

I sipped and swallowed a cup of house paint, confusing it with a glass of wine. I was sooooo wrecked.

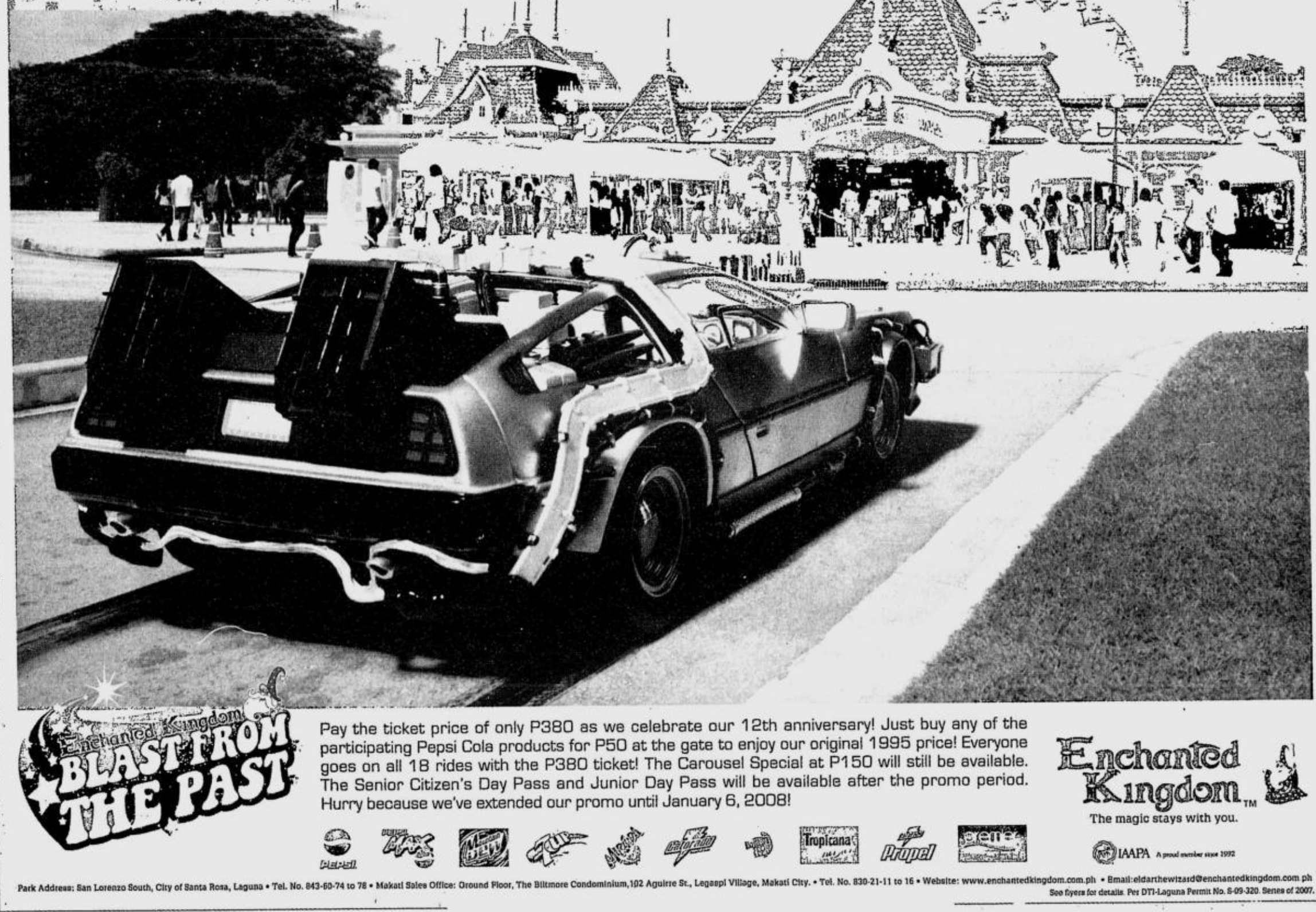
What are your plans for the future?

When I reach 70 or 80, I'll become a part-time artist. When I'm dead, I'll come back to pick my wife up once she gives me a sign.

What's it like in the universe that you've created?

It's a bit about the incompleteness that's present in all of mankind. It's about struggling. It's about life. It's about love.

Go back to the 90s.



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Rock the Riles 2007

FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS, Rock Ed Philippines has been celebrating Human Rights Day with a mammoth gathering of young artists, students, teachers, poets, photographers and etc.

Their biggest accomplishment is that we are able to provide the young Filipinos a venue to take a visible stand *for* Human Rights. Arguably, one of the more creative Human Rights Day rallies in the world, Rock the Riles has attracted the attention of the UN Millennium Campaign as they have constantly covered it since it's inception. First held in 2005, participation in Rock the Riles has grown ten-fold.

Held every Sunday closest to the official International Human Rights Day (Dec. 10 is the official date, this year it will be held on the 9th of December) we transform eight MRT stations into eight performance spaces in celebration of it. Each station has a UN Millennium Development Goal as a theme. (Hunger, Poverty, Education, Child and Infant Health, AIDS and preventable diseases, Environmental Sustainability, Global Trade, Justice).

It is held on a Sunday so we minimize people skipping work or school, it is held in the train stations so we don't cause any street traffic or jamming. School administrators, student organizations, NGOs, production houses all contribute to this celebration.

Taking a visible stand for human rights is always a worthwhile cause. The fact that you get the chance to witness over 30 bands, view exhibits of excellent photographers, listen to spoken word and poetry performed for free is just bonus. I think the participation in Rock the Riles is always affirmed because most of us are hungry to lend our voices to this global push for equality, justice, and peace. I think it is also important for us young Filipinos to know that we are many in this battle against apathy.

I suppose once the feeling of "being alone in this fight" is gone, we are off to braver things and decisions to defend human rights. Sometimes, that's what it's all about.

READ more on the past two celebrations, photos included:

Riles 2005 info: http://rockedphilippines.org/projects_imbitadoka.html

Riles 2006 info: http://rockedphilippines.org/projects_imbitado06.html

Toying with the idea of better films

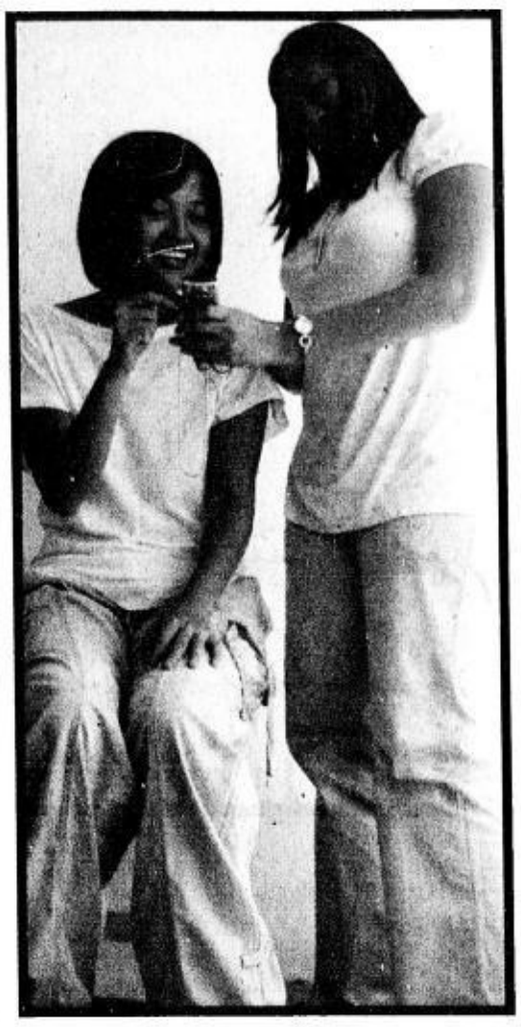
PANORAMANILA CO. IS A NEW breed of young filmmakers emerging from both independent and mainstream film backgrounds. Their hope is to marry the strengths of both worlds ... the creative energy of indie spirit and the sound business structures of mainstream cinema. They wish to be a part of The Inspired Age of Philippine Cinema ... much like the one the world experienced before ... during the prolific times of the Golden Age of Philippine Cinema.

Jourdan Sebastian (one of the producers) has been a pioneer in independent digital filmmaking, riding the first waves of Cinemalaya Film Festival in its starting years. Guia Gonzalez (another producer) has been working for Star Cinema for five years as Malou Santos' assistant working on the most mainstream projects as they can get. Dante Nico is the director and has been in show biz, rubbing elbows with celebrities since the time he started his career as production designer for a film called Super B! He just recently won for his production designer work in Cinemalaya Finalist "Pisay." Their first film offering is a 35mm film entitled "Ploning." To be shot entirely on live sound and showcasing a cast of internationally-awarded Filipino artists and a very bankable lead actress, in the person of Ms Judy Ann Santos. For this film their goal is to present a more beautiful and scenic Philippines. Steering away from the usual images of poverty and slum, sex and gambling trade and violence proliferating our Filipino indie films. There is a need to venture into a film project presenting to the world a Philippines that is rich in nature, with lush and pristine scenes of province life. The shooting of Ploning will be entirely on-location in the beautiful island of Cuyo, Palawan. The same island group as the world renowned Amanpulo Resort.

Panoramanila's intention is to make high-quality films that will be enjoyed by the Filipino people and engage an international audience. Ploning intends to come out as a film that will have a compelling story backed up by technical excellence and high-caliber casts and crew and hope to engage audiences across economic or cultural borders.

After a dip in film productions in the late 90s to present, there has been a resurgence of production in films but more in the independent side. Because of technology, proliferation of film festivals and the bravado of this new breed of filmmakers, a lot of indie films are coming out of the woodworks. The downside is a lot of these filmmakers are one time filmmakers. Filmmaking as some have neglected to consider, is still a business. A lot of these filmmakers invested their sweat and blood for film projects that would not even pay a month's rent. A lot of these good-intentioned filmmakers are now languishing in obscure jobs trying to make ends meet ... while their brilliant works of art did not even experience distribution and sadly for some were not even screened. Simply because their film projects were not backed up by sound business plans in the first place.

DIRECTOR Dante



PRODUCER Guia and prod manager Dawn

PRODUCER Jourdan

What could possibilities be? Panoramanila gives some of their suggestions:

● Proper valuation of all collaborators

"We believe in valuating our talents the right way. The 'indie' word has been exploited enough so that now the word is synonymous to film productions that have 'no talent fees' or 'TY' and doing productions in horrible conditions. We want to redeem this by treating our cast and crew with the respect they deserve.

"First of all we are implementing an equity-sharing scheme for all our collaborators including not only the investors but the creative production team and cast as well. Because of our limited resources we will still compensate them 'initially' with 'indie' rates. But their talents and efforts are valuated properly through a profit-sharing program we have agreed with them in writing. Each cast or crew that were not compensated fully because of capital constraints are given an equitable ownership of the film project so that once the film does earn money, they earn according to their allotted percentage. This way the talents that they gave so generously in the production are translated into tangible 'investments' for them. Right now, from the main actress to our production designers, lighting directors and wardrobe are enjoying this kind of arrangement."

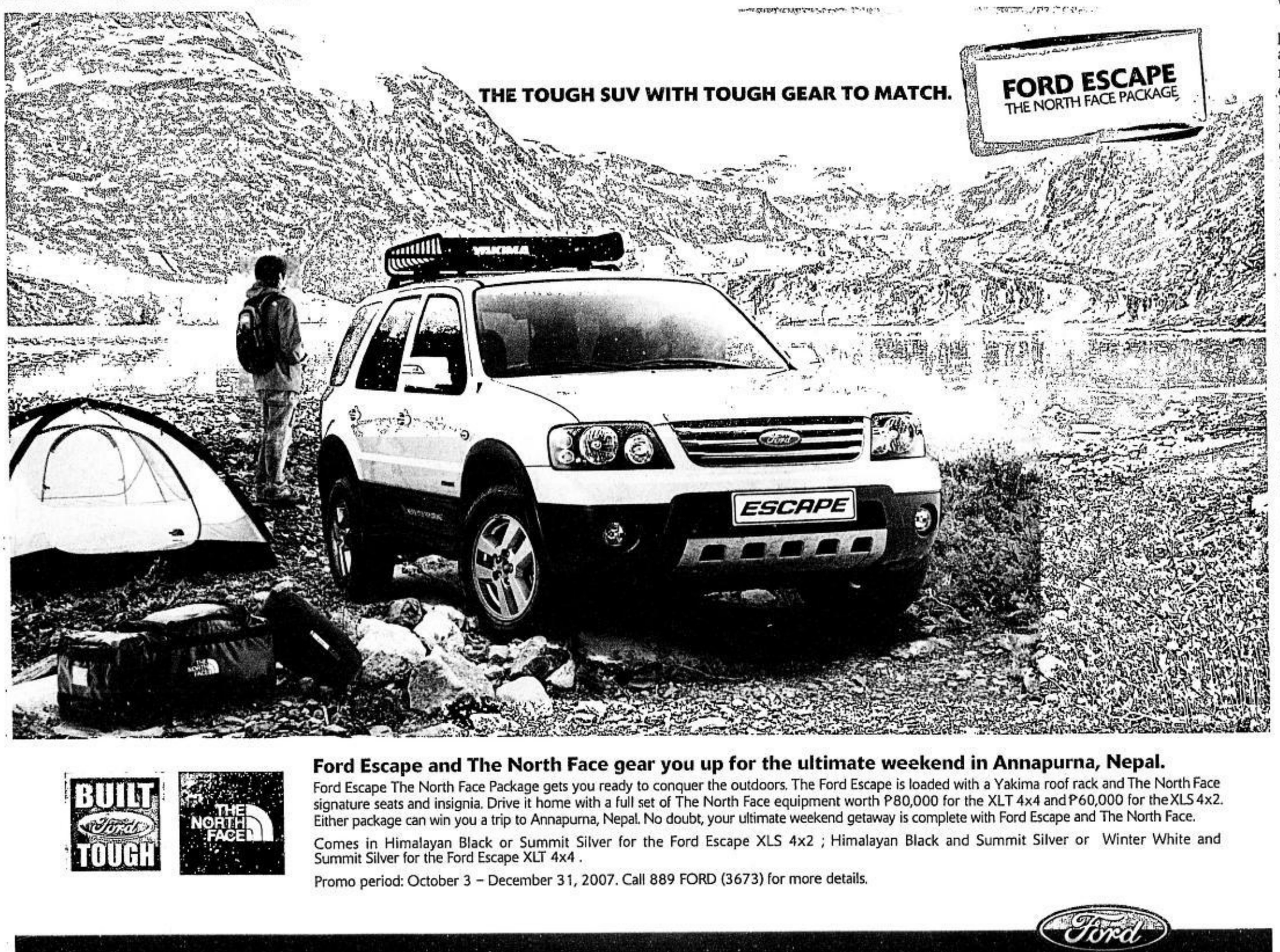
● Empowered business plan

"Since we have equitably distributed the 'risk and success' of the film not only for investors but also for the production people we are responsible for supporting the film project with a diligent and progressive business plan. As most independent filmmakers are primarily concerned with just making their films, we are supporting them by making distribution and marketing our primary responsibility. Our film projects are assured nationwide distribution and will enjoy intensive promotional and marketing campaigns.

"Our initial film offering Ploning will be shown in theaters nationwide on April 30, 2008 (a payday and holiday weekend). The given playdate already reserved for us with the (NCAP) National Cinema Association of the Philippines. And because of the marketability of our project we are already in smooth negotiations with distributors for this film not only for local but international release as well.

"These two simple strategies came about as we married the different experiences and dynamics we learned from the different engagements we have had individually ... both in mainstream and independent filmmaking ... both locally and internationally. For more than a year now Jourdan has been part of financing development for different local and international independent films not, including a Hollywood project to be shot in the Philippines and an arthouse experimental film he shot in Mumbai. Guia has been involved in international film festivals and film markets because of her various projects with Star Cinema. But this design has been inspired primarily by our quest to have excellent film production processes for their filmmakers and their desire to uplift the Philippine film industry as a whole.

"We hope and dream that as we have more faith in the Filipino audience and the Filipino filmmaker a new season of excellent and creative film projects will come about and entertain and engage audiences not only in the Philippines but all over the world as well."



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SATURDAY Special

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Amy Adams is now a Hollywood princess

LOS ANGELES—When Amy Adams was nominated for an Academy Award, she still lived in the rundown apartment she rented when she moved to Los Angeles with movie-star dreams. "It was a bit of a slum," she shared. "And the carpet hadn't been changed in 16 years!"

ADAMS. Shares the screen with Streep and McDormand in upcoming movies. AP

Charmed career

Fast-forward to today, and Adams, 33, is now a Hollywood princess, literally. She plays an animated Disney princess who comes to life in "Enchanted"—and her charmed career will see her share the screen with two of her idols: Meryl Streep

AMY/H2

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BARHOM. Most noteworthy turn in "The Kingdom"

Outstanding performances buoy up sluggish actioner

FOXX. Plays an FBI agent in Peter Berg's film.

By Noelani Torre

THE FIRST 15 MINUTES OF THE ACTION movie, "The Kingdom," are misleading. Beginning with a quick montage summarizing the United States' gnarly, decades-old, oil-based relationship with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and then, segueing into a harrowing terrorist attack on an American residential compound in that country (vaguely reminiscent of the bombing of Khobar Towers back in 1996), the film would have you think that it's a smart geopolitical thriller that will raise incisive questions about US involvement in the Middle East.

The movie, however, leans more towards the bullets-and-blood mayhem of "Rambo" than to the demanding, intelligent examinations of "Syriana" which isn't really as bad as it sounds. While not as compelling as the latter, "The Kingdom" fortunately doesn't descend to the simplistic, jingoistic level of the former.

Instead, in an effort to be both action-packed and smart, it occupies an uneasy middle ground that will leave most of its viewers feeling unsatisfied while it's playing, but will nonetheless provide a certain level of enjoyment.

Deft hand

Helmed by the actor-turned-director Peter Berg, the film is interesting enough, boasts of a competent cast, and includes some outstanding performances. Berg has a deft hand with the visuals and with the action sequences—though the camera is sometimes too shaky to the point of making one feel nauseous and the movie is hampered by ill-timed pacing.

The tension that is successfully established in the beginning loses its tautness shortly thereafter, as the momentum slows down to a slog that's only occasionally enlivened by whizzing bullets and explosions.

After the explosion in Saudi Arabia—which kills more than a hundred people, including two FBI agents—the story shifts to the US, where a four-person FBI team contrives (by way of blackmail) to gain entry to the kingdom to investigate the blast. They only have five days to conduct their investigation, and their task is made even harder by the fact that they're only there by sufferance and are not really allowed to move around freely.

Starring Academy Award-winning actors, Jamie Foxx and Chris Cooper, the cast is completed by Jennifer Garner, Jason Bateman ("Arrested Development") and Ashraf Barhom. Foxx is agent Ronald Fleury, the leader of a team made up of Sykes (Cooper), Mayes (Garner) and Leavitt (Bateman).

Despite the presence of two Oscar-toting actors, however, the most noteworthy performance is that of Barhom, who plays Col. Faris Al Ghazi, the team's liaison and glorified babysitter. The Arab-Israeli actor brings his otherwise sketchy character to full, frustrated life, and adds depth and resonance to the bond he develops with Foxx's Fleury.

Proficiency

The actors' proficiency can't make up for the sluggish pace, however, as well as the exploitative feel of the devices it uses (including a scene recalling the execution of journalist Daniel Pearl). Still, it does have a neat one-liner ending. If you can get past the film's Rambo-esque elements, there are insights here that are worth pondering about.

Iza Calzado teams up with Ken Zhu in 'Batanes'

By Remy Umerez

WITH ITS TITLE, YOU MIGHT think "Batanes" is a special feature on National Georgraphic. It could have been, but it is not. A joint venture of Ignite Media and GMA-7, "Batanes" is essentially a picturesque romance, and an intimate portrait of a woman's relationship with the sea. It is written (and codirected) by Adolf Alix Jr. and Dave Hukom. The story in a nutshell:

It is a whirlwind romance when Pam (Iza Calzado) meets Ivatan Rico (Joem Bascon), and follows him to Batanes where they wed.

Pam tries to adjust to the Ivatan way of life, but finds the sea threatening. One day, Rico does not return from fishing, and she blames no one but the sea.

Stranger

On the anniversary of his death, she sails to Ivujos island and get stranded in a storm. She sees a man lying in the sand. The stranger turns out to be Taiwanese. She drags Kao (Ken Zhu) to her boat after his fever subsides and takes him back with her to the village.

The villagers are reluctant to accept the Taiwanese since most fishermen from Taiwan fish illegally in Batanes. As Pam tries to take care of Kao, she starts to be drawn towards him. Then, despite language and cultural differences, love beckons.

The role of Pam was originally meant for Judy Ann Santos, who liked the part but had to beg off due to a previous commitment. The popular actress suggested Iza, who was then finishing her scenes in "The Echo," the English-language remake of Yam Laranas' horror film, "Sigaw. "In the future, Iza says she would like to play out-of-the box roles similar to her character in another indie movie, "Mona: Singapore Escort."

Ken Zhu auditioned for the role of the fisherman. He's best known here as one of the members of the Taiwanese boy band F-4. He speaks English and Cantonese. He starred in the famous TV series, "Meteor Garden," and its sequel, "Meteor Rain," which swept Asia by storm. He played the lead in the movies, "Sky of Love" (2003) and "Tokyo Trial" (2006).

First feature

Adolf Alix Jr.'s first feature, "Donsol," was a finalist in the 2006 Cinemalaya film festival where it won Best Actress (for Angel Aquino) and Best Cinematography honors. It then bagged the Special Jury trophies in the Asian Marine Film Festival in Japan and the Fort Lauderdale film festival.

CALZADO. Enjoys her forays into indie filmmaking.

David Hukom is the CEO of Ignite Media, a post production company. He is a video and film editor, creative director, systems specialist, integrator and designer. His credits as a film editor include "Madrasta," "The Promise" and "Pamihiin."

Gift of knowledge

MIDSAYAP, COTOBATO—Early this month, the San Isidro Elementary School in North Cotobato became the 150th school to receive educational television (ETV) facilities and livelihood video modules ("Negosyo Ko, Asenso Ko") from Team Mindanao.

The event was attended by Education Secretary Jesli Lapus and Usaid's mission director, Jon Londborg. The turnover also marked the official end of The Knowledge Channel (KCh) project in this part of the country.

Team Mindanao is a $1-million Usaid-assisted program that aims to boost quality of education in conflict-affected areas in the country. It has improved the academic performance of grade school and high school students through ETV programs covering the DepEd's basic learning competencies in Math, Science and English since 2004.

Poverty alleviation

Secretary Lapus said: "Education is the No. 1 measure in poverty alleviation. It's an excellent tool used as an instrument of peace in areas of conflict."

According to Doris Nuval, Team Mindanao project director, Knowledge Channel has made an impact on the academic performance of its end users, especially in the province of Zamboanga Sibugay. All 15 schools with KCh have posted significant improvements in all subject areas in the Division Achievement Tests (DAT).

The Habib Moin Anduhol Elementary School rose from 25th place (43.03 percent) in 2005-2006 to seventh place (61.34 percent) in 2006-2007. Bangkerohan Elementary School also improved from 27th place (50.35 percent) in 2005-2006—and bagged first place (68 percent) in 2006-2007 in the DAT!

STREET SMART

Mandy Navasero

Infrastructure

Some local government units have supported Team Mindanao's project by paying their schools' electric bills, improving KCh's viewing rooms, providing mats for children to sit on and more importantly, maintaining and ensuring the safety of the ETV infrastructure.

With Team Mindanao, KCh is now in the southernmost municipality of the country—Sitangkai, Tawi Tawi, where schools were electrified with solar panels before the infrastructure was installed.

Nuval added: "Tawi Tawi children now enjoy the advantages of having educational television like their Manila counterparts, in effect, equalizing teaching and learning opportunities."

***

Join the Batanes Photo Safari from Dec. 27 to 30 and Jan. 4-7 if you wish to experience the closest thing to winter in this country. The Batanes Children's Choir will sing Christmas carols in Tukon Church, which boasts of a 360-degree view of the province's hills and the sea. Visit www.mandynavasero.com or e-mail mandynavasero@yahoo.com or call 8991767.

Amy Adams is now a ... From page H1

and Frances McDormand.

Luck

Part of what got her this far is luck, Adams claimed, her still-wet strawberry blond hair tucked under a gray-knit cap as she settled in for tea at her favorite diner. But, most of her success is due to her unflagging focus—a quality that's made her an in-demand actress, but at a cost: She's a "kind of boring" person.

"I need hobbies," she added. "I've been so focused on my career that I just read scripts, and I really became very uninteresting. I'm going to spend some time researching what my true interests are outside of acting—because I really love what I do!"

Adams was still a kid when she decided performing would be her profession. She honed her dancing skills and eventually moved to Minnesota, where she worked in musical theater. Something told her she could act, but at first, she didn't believe it.

First professional acting job

"As a dancer, you're not encouraged to speak," she observed. "It took me a long time to be brave enough to say I wanted to be an actress!"—about three years, to be specific. Once she acknowledged it, she then moved to Los Angeles, and within two weeks, she'd booked her first professional acting job!

A few years later, Amy was already rubbing elbows with her idols at Oscar parties and enjoying accolades for her outstanding performance in 2005's "Junebug." Earning an Oscar nomination so early in her career didn't diminish her focus, but it did shift her perspective: "It was like, well, now what? But now, I can just focus on the journey—what stories do I want to tell, and what characters do I want to play?"

The options have been coming in ample supply. Adams was cast in "Enchanted" before earning the Oscar nomination, but the film heralds a slew of projects. She'll next be seen in the Christmas release, "Charlie Wilson's War," opposite Tom Hanks, Julia Roberts and Philip Seymour Hoffman.

After that comes "Miss Pettigrew Lives for a Day," a film that stars Frances McDormand. Adams is also set to appear in "Sunshine Cleaning" with Alan Arkin and Emily Blunt, and she just started work on "Doubt," with Dustin Hoffman and Meryl Streep.

Curiosity

In each of the films, Adams brings the same sunny optimism that caught critics' eyes in "Junebug." She seeks out joyous characters and likes playing women struggling with questions of faith. Some of that curiosity comes from her Mormon upbringing. But, it also mirrors her own quest for balance and fulfillment.

"I like to be *uber*focused. I'm not good at the balancing act of working and then living life," she mused. "I get self-absorbed when I'm working. In an ideal world, I'll eventually be able to achieve balance. I don't know if that's possible—but let's wait and see!" *AP*

Festive film premieres ... From page H4

is also holding a holiday sale until tomorrow, with up to 50-percent discount on great finds.

'Three Days of Darkness'

"Three Days of Darkness" (Tatlong Araw ng Kadiliman) starts its run on Dec. 12 at IndieSine at Robinsons Movieworld Galleria. The ultradark and ultraeseductive year-end offering stars Katya Santos, Gwen Garci, Precious Adona and Butz Daigo. The sex-horror-thriller is directed by Khavn dela Cruz, some of whose movies have won honors here and abroad.

Movies on TV

On HBO today at 3 p.m., "Awakening." Tomorrow at 11 a.m., "Pale Rider." Dec. 3 at 7 a.m., "Sweet Liberty." Dec. 4 at 7 p.m., "War of the Worlds" (2005). Dec. 5 at 7 p.m., "Planes, Trains and Automobiles." Dec. 6 at 7 a.m., "The Legend of Butch and Sundance." Dec. 7 at 3 p.m., "Fly Away Home."

On Cinemax today at 7 a.m., "Every Which Way But Loose." Tomorrow at 11 p.m., "Carolina Moon." Dec. 3 at 3 p.m., "Breakfast at Tiffany's." Dec. 4 at 1 p.m., "Blue Smoke." Dec. 5 at 11 a.m., "The Thing." Dec. 6 at 5 p.m., "Chameleon." Dec. 7 at 1 p.m., "The Lost Boys."

'Romeo and Juliet'

Gantimpala Theater stages Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" starting Dec. 7 (10 a.m. and 2 p.m.) at the AFP Theater in Quezon City. Monica Llamas and Lance Raymundo play the star-crossed lovers. Call 899-5745 or 896-3503.

Mall shows

Jose Mari Chan promotes his "Love Letters and Other Souvenirs" today at 5 p.m. at SM Bacoor. Sam Concepcion performs at SM Megamall on Dec. 2 at 5 p.m.

And Parokya ni Edgar's new "Solid" album will be formally launched at Eastwood City Central Plaza at 8 p.m. on Dec. 3.

Nickelodeon's Big Help Campaign

From 2 to 6 p.m. today at the Mall of Asia Complex, Nickelodeon's Big Help Campaign culminates with a big bang. Hop on the sharing wagon with hosts Robi Joseph and Sam Concepcion, join the games, and help build a house for a GK-Batang Bayani Village.

'Ang Lalake sa Parola'

"Ang Lalake sa Parola" is now available on DVD and VCD. The provocative film topbills Harry Laurel, Justin de Leon, jennifer Lee, Sheree and Alan Paule.

'Ratatouille'

The fun animated feature, "Ratatouille," is now on DVD, and comes with a sumptuous selection of bonus features, including deleted scenes, a behind-the-scenes look at how master chef and restauranteur Thomas Keller used his expertise to shape the film, and several short films.

"RATATOUILLE." Pixar's acclaimed animated feature is now on DVD.

'Gone, Baby, Gone'

Each day in the US, 2,000 children are reported missing. The new edge-of-your-seat thriller, "Gone, Baby, Gone," follows the explosive case of one missing little girl, leading to a labyrinthine maze of evil and corruption. "Gone, Baby, Gone" has been acclaimed by critics and will be screened at Ayala Mall cinemas starting Dec. 5.

Vaughn's Christmas flick botches ... From page H3

movie itself elicits more winces than laughs. In fact, even mere chuckles are hard to come by, which, for a comedy, makes for tragedy, indeed.

Directed by David Dobkin ("Wedding Crashers"), the film has Vaughn in his fast-talking conman persona playing the titular character. Vaughn, who's already proven himself in comedy before, is curiously flat here. His Fred, despite the rapid speech, looks rather tired and bleary-eyed, maybe because the script asks him to take his character's issues seriously, as though this were a heavy, tear-jerking drama and not the PG-rated comedy it purports to be.

The entire movie, in fact, dwells seriously on its characters' various issues instead of trying to make fun of them as a comedy should. And when it's not getting all scrunch-faced and serious, it gets sappy while you, the viewer, find yourself uncomfortably placed in the cringe-worthy middle.

Pitch-perfect

While Vaughn muddles his way through, Giamatti, in his role as the much put-upon Saint Nicholas, is just about pitch-perfect, though he *does* look too well-padded even for his role as the famously rotund saint.

Miranda Richardson plays Santa's wife, Annette; Kathy Bates is Fred and Nick's mother; Rachel Weisz, as an improbably beautiful English-accented meter maid, is Fred's girlfriend; and Kevin Spacey is an efficiency expert.

Everybody makes an effort, but not even the most wonderful acting in the world can compensate for a messy storyline with forced elements—and a heart that's obviously in the wrong place.

Crime novelist marvels at his luck in Hollywood

NEW YORK—BOOKSTORES ARE LINED with the works of novelists who've never seen their creations make it to the silver screen—or those who've been burned when they do. Count Dennis Lehane among the doubly fortunate few.

First, Clint Eastwood made a film classic out of the respected crime writer's "Mystic River," with that scorching, Oscar-winning performance by Sean Penn.

Then, Ben Affleck made his highly acclaimed directorial debut recently with "Gone Baby Gone." Within days, came word that Martin Scorsese would direct the author's "Shutter Island" next year—with Leonardo DiCaprio to star in it!

Fortuitous news

With that last bit of fortuitous news, Lehane pronounces himself almost embarrassed. "It's egregious!," he muses. "I didn't tell anybody. My fiancee said, 'Why don't you call people?' I answered: 'Let's just pile it on!'"

So, what is Lehane's explanation? His talent is not, he insists, nor is the originality of his stories' plots, going so far as to say his plots "could be found on an episode of 'CSI' or 'Law & Order.'"

He's merely happy to take credit for doing what he does very well—which is to write meaty, morally ambiguous, and thought-provoking crime novels centered in the seamiest parts of Boston. His explanation for his success is simpler: Pure luck. "I'm just the luckiest guy on the planet!," he declares. "Because I'm Irish, I keep looking at the sky and waiting for it to fall!"

Hollywood observers will hasten to add that the Lehane recipe requires, in addition to luck and a generous helping of talent, a healthy serving of the maxim, "Success begets success."

Track record

"Everybody loves a winner—especially in Hollywood," explains film historian, Leonard Maltin. "So, when you start building a track record, people in the industry respond to that. They're trying to attract a top-level cast. They may not have even read the books, but they know that the first one had a meaty dramatic role that led to an Oscar for Sean Penn!"

Still, Maltin agrees, "It's a pretty amazing trifecta of filmmakers to be attracted to one writer's work. I don't know how much precedent there is for it, if any. Especially one that's so close together!"

Actually, before he penned "Mystic River" in 2001, Lehane had a loyal following with his series of five detective novels featuring homegrown Boston private eye, Patrick Kenzie and his girlfriend, Angie Gennaro.

They began with "A Drink Before the War" in 1994, but they truly took off with the fourth, 1998's "Gone, Baby, Gone," a dark tale about an abducted child. (For the film, Ben Affleck took the commas out of the title and cast his brother, Casey Affleck, in the lead.)

First book

"They've been huge sellers in our store," reveals Otto Penzler, owner of The Mysterious Bookshop in New York City. "From his first book, there's no question Lehane has been one of the top writers in America in the crime novel genre."

The novelist should be judged by "the same standards you'd bring to any literature," Penzler muses. "He creates serious, real characters who have a heart, and his dialogue is absolutely believable!"

Indeed, all of Lehane's novels (he just finished his eighth, a historical work called "The Given Day") have been set in Boston, his hometown. The sense of place that infuses his work, film critic Stephen Hunter of The Washington Post wrote recently, is a chief pleasure of Lehane's books, which are "like a tour of back-alley, blue-collar Beantown; spend time with them in any form, and you start swallowing your r's, then spitting them out as h's."

LEHANE. Popular with Tinseltown's top filmmakers.

"MYSTIC RIVER." Won Best Actor Oscar for Sean Penn.

Lehane was born 41 years ago in the working-class neighborhood of Dorchester, the youngest of five children of Irish immigrants. His father worked in the shipping department of Sears, Roebuck, while his mother worked in a public school cafeteria.

AFFLECK. Directs film version of "Gone, Baby, Gone."

Calling

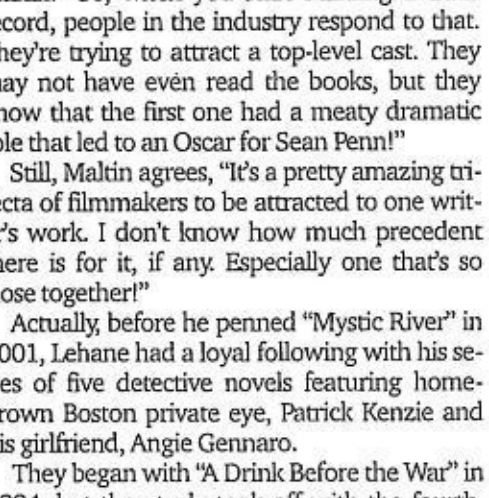
After dropping out of college, he found his calling, and sold "A Drink Before the War" while he was still in graduate school at Florida International University. Then, he moved back north.

His $8,000 advance was just enough "for a good meal, a crappy used car, and taxes," certainly not enough to quit his job as a parking valet at the Ritz-Carlton, albeit one with a master's degree.

DI CAPRIO. Topbills Martin Scorcese's big-screen adaptation of "Shutter Island."

In 1997, Lehane had moved up to house chauffeur and finally quit. "Gone, Baby, Gone" came out the next year—a "career-changer," Lehane admits. Of course, he chuckles, it didn't hurt that President Clinton was shown exiting Air Force One with the book tucked under his arm.

"After that book, I was suddenly living on good money," Lehane recounts. But, it was "Mystic River" in 2001, another supremely dark work about child abuse, murder, and people doing wrong things, that propelled him to the bestsellers' list! *AP*



VAUGHN AND GIAMATTI. Play brothers in "Fred Claus."

Vaughn's Christmas flick botches its comedic potential

By Noelani Torre

ONE OF THE TWO UNEXPECTED things about the Christmas comedy, "Fred Claus," is that it isn't very funny. Given that, the other unexpected thing is that actors like Vince Vaughn, Paul Giamatti, Rachel Weisz, Miranda Richardson, Kathy Bates and Kevin Spacey agreed to do the movie.

That th emovie is not all that funny is unexpected because its premise is one that already has a lot of comedic potential.

Tendency

The story follows Fred, jolly old Santa's unsaintly older brother (played by Vaughn), who's been overlooked and overshadowed for most of his life. After all, it's hard to make yourself noticed if your brother happens to be a saint who has a tendency to give free stuff away.

The film's trailer was funny, but the

VAUGHN'S/ H2

Festive film premieres on Hallmark

CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS ON THE HALLmark Channel with these inspiring viewing treats: Dec. 13 at 10 p.m., "12 Days of Christmas Eve," about an ambitious businessman who forgoes Christmas—only to end up in a hospital. He's given only 12 chances to set things straight—or else!

MONTAGE

Dec. 23 at 9 p.m., "Meet the Santas," about Nick Claus (Steve Guttenberg) getting married to a lovely girl (Crystal Bernard)—whose mother, unfortunately, casts doubts on Nick's sanity!

Also watch out for these Christmas movies: Dec. 15, "Fallen Angel." Dec. 16, "The Christmas Shoes." Dec 17, "Mr, St. Nick." Dec. 18, "The Christmas Box." Dec. 19, "Santa Jr." Dec. 20, "Silent Night." Dec. 21, "Midsomer Murders: Ghosts of Christmas Past." Dec. 22, "A Christmas Visitor." And, Dec. 24, "A Christmas Carol."

DANNY PHANTOM. The animated show's holiday special will be telecast on Nickelodeon.

Have a Merry 'Nick-mas'

Join Nickolodeon's School Holiday Specials on a Double Trouble Marathon weekdays from Dec. 3 to 31, from 12 noon to 3 p.m., with SpongeBob SquarePants, Jimmy Neutron and Danny Phantom.

On Nick-mas morning at 8:30 a.m. on "Blue's Clues," Blue celebrates her first holiday season. At 9 a.m., on "Wonder Pets," Tuck, Ming-Ming and Linny save the reindeer in time for gift-giving. At 9:30 a.m. on "Dora The Explorer," Dora and Boots turn the tables on Santa—and give *him* a present. At 10 a.m., don't miss "The SpongeBob Christmas Special."

Other shows: 10:30 a.m., "Fairly Oddparents." 11 a.m., "The Adventures of Jimmy Neutron." 11:30 a.m., "As Told by Ginger."

Plus: Two Holiday Movie Specials—Dec. 25 at 3 and 8:30 p.m., "The Jerkinators—Jimmy Timmy Power Hour." Dec. 31 at 12 noon and 8:30 p.m., "My Life As A Teenage Robot." www.nicksplat.com.

SOSSAMON. Stars in Elliott and Coker's suspense-thriller.

'Catacombs'

The producers of the hit trilogy, "Saw," have come up with a new nightmarish thriller, "Catacombs," starring Shannyn Sossamon as Victoria, who heads for Paris to visit her wild sister, "Carolyn" (Pink).

One night, Victoria is swept into the Parisian underground rave scene in the city's catacombs. Victoria finds herself lost in the darkness, pursued by someone or *something* terrifying.

Pink observes, "I was attracted to the story because it's very psychological. It's not your typical scary movie—it's a lot more intelligent. The most scary part is us human beings, how evil some of us can be." "Catacombs" is written and directed by David Elliott and Tomm Coker.

"MEET THE SANTAS." TV movie follows what happens to Santa when he falls in love with a lovely girl.

At Enchanted Kingdom

Be at Enchanted Kingdom's Rialto Theatre Lobby at the Brooklyn Place at 3 p.m. tomorrow as SpongeBob SquarePants drops in to welcome park guests to the premiere of the latest ridefilm, "SpongeBob SquarePants, the Ride."

The 10-minute ridefilm is produced by the leader in motion stimulators, Simex!Iwerks Entertainment. It is a favorite attractions at Six Flags Over Texas, Le Ronde and Adventuredome.

WILSON, CHU AND SHERMAN. Topbill New Voice's controversial hit play.

'TVM' goes to Iloilo

Monique Wilson teams up with Lynn Sherman and Lily Chu when the New Voice Company brings Eve Ensler's acclaimed hit play, "The Vagina Monologues," to the CAP Auditorium in Iloilo City on Dec. 9, with performances at 3 and 7 p.m.

The controversial show, sponsored by the Panay chapter of the Philippine Obstetrical and Gynecological Society, aims to raise funds for the organization's Cervical Cancer Screening project for indigent women. Call Dr. Roseller Cabado at (033) 337-6585 or 0917 711-2167.

'Orosman at Zafira' auditions at UP

Dulaang UP announces auditions for actors and musicians for its next production, Francisco Balagtas' "Orosman at Zafira" on Dec. 3 and 5 from 6 to 9 p.m. at Teatro Hermogenes Ylagan, Faculty Center, UP Diliman. The reimagined *komedya* will be directed by Dexter Santos. Call Joanne Quiros at 926-1349 or 0917 242-0090, or visit www.orosmanatzafira.multiply.com.

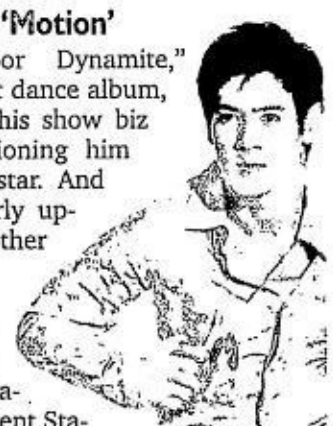
KC, Jose Mari perform in JVP Christmas concert

The Jesuit Volunteers of the Philippines and Ang Arko ng Pilipinas present a special Christmas concert on Dec. 12, 7:30 p.m. at the BDO Francisco Santiago Hall, BDO Tower 2, Makati ave., Makati City. Performers include Jose Mari Chan, Randy Gilongo, Oggie Benepayo, Drew Ybañez, Hangad and AKA, with KC Concepcion in a special number. Call 426-5908 or 891-9999.

'After Aida'

Music Artes presents 'After Aida," the musical on the life of Giuseppe Verdi, on Dec. 5 and 7, 8 p.m. at the BDO Francisco Santiago Hall, Makati City. Jaime del Mundo directs Paul Holme, Nieves Campa and Bart Guingona. Call 895-8098.

John Prats in 'Motion'



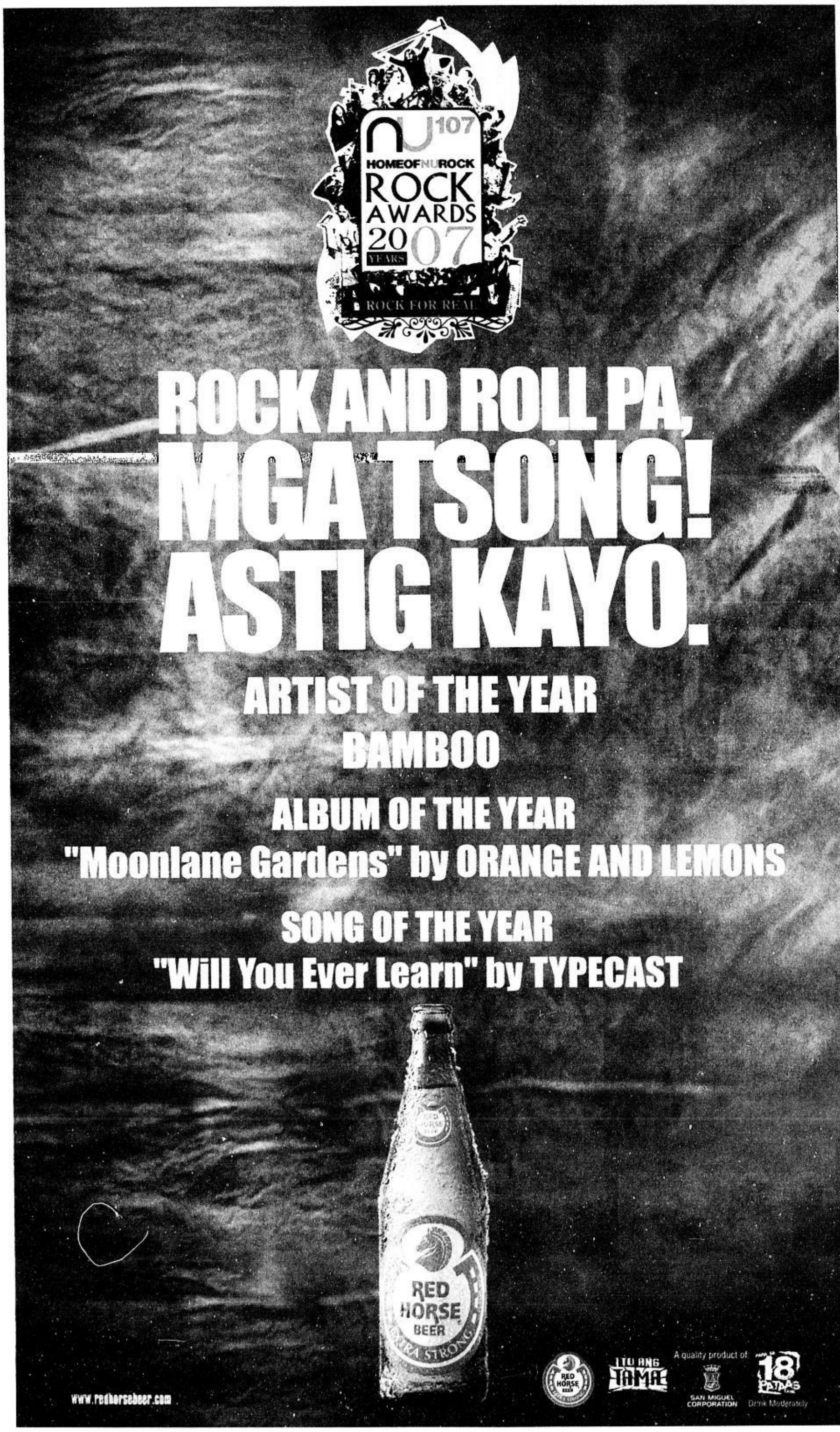
PRATS. Has come out with his first dance album.

"Dance Floor Dynamite," John Prats' first dance album, has redefined his show biz career, repositioning him as a dancing star. And John is similarly upbeat about another newfound love—the scent of Motion, his new signature fragrance from Scent Station.

The fragrance company has come up with more than 50 variants of imported perfumes. John was so enthusiastic about concocting his own scent that he even designed the bottle. Motion is available at SM, Robinsons and other malls.

Sale at Starmall

Take advantage of the preholiday sale at Starmall Edsa, Las Piñas ad Metropolis Star Alabang today and tomorrow. Finds Superstore



SATURDAY Special

Piolo and Sam evince growth in latest albums

By Rito P. Asilo

THERE WAS ANTICIPATION OVER THE CONsecutive releases of the latest albums of two of the country's most prominent—and controversial—heartthrobs: Piolo Pascual's "Timeless" and Sam Milby's "A Little Too Perfect."

Pascual is celebrating his 10th year in the business—a milestone for someone who started getting good notices in Jose Javier Reyes' "Batang PX."

But, stardom wasn't really handed to Piolo on a silver platter. In fact, way before he landed a supporting role in the Zsa Zsa Padilla-Patrick Garcia starrer, he also played forgettable roles in films like Carlo Caparas' "Vizconde Massacre 2, The Untold Story."

The release of Milby's latest album is likewise significant for the Fil-Am actor—who found stardom after his stint inside the "Pinoy Big Brother" house—because it's been a year since the release of his last full-length collection. Happily, both albums also demonstrate significant growth for the two actor-singers.

Sensitivity

In "One More Chance," the first track in Pascual's "Timeless," for instance, Piolo displays confident control of his vocal facility when he slides and glides from the second stanza to the chorus. It helps that he's also able to utilize his sensitivity as an actor to convey the tune's emotional context. As he prepares for the crowd-pleasing ending, he shifts from throaty belting to smooth crooning with admirable ease.

After four hit albums, Piolo has obviously learned some good tricks about control—even his low vocal register sounds fuller now. (Of course, hearing a performer sing live is another story.) Another proof of artistic growth is the presence of two better-than-average, self-penned tracks, "Why Can't We Be Together?" and "There for Me," which are easy on the ears.

Another top pick is his aurally pleasant duet with Toni Gonzaga, "If Only Love," a song written by Willy Wilcox, composer of "Suddenly, It's Magic." Gonzaga's pop-friendly vocal quality complements Pascual's smooth baritone (Toni may not be a belter, but she's among very few local recording talents who have a knack for choosing songs that suit their idiosyncratic singing styles and vocal affectations).

We are likewise bowled over by the lush "Wagas," a sweeping, melody-rich throwback to the unabashed romanticism of George Canseco and Willy Cruz's timeless love songs! In our book, this tune is one of the most beautiful Tagalog songs we've heard this year! Other songs with chart-topping potential include "Turuan Mo Ako" and "Ikaw Pa Rin," which is reminiscent of Wency Cornejo's "Hanggang."

Quibble

Our minor quibble involves the inclusion of Jim Brickman's "To Hear You Say You Love Me," which was recently covered by Lea Salonga in her "Inspired" album. To be fair, Piolo's version isn't bad, but compared to Salonga's bell-like voice, the heartthrob is simply outclassed!

Like Piolo's 13-track album, Sam's latest collection, "A Little Too Perfect," which also contains 13 songs, boasts of self-written tunes and Jim Brickman compositions: "Shining Star" and "Love of My Life." He too shows some growth as a singer—though his vocal quality limits his ability to sing songs from other musical genres.

The opening track, written by a Swedish composer, is a vibrant finger-snapper that takes full advantage of Sam's full, rock-styled voice. The quasi-gospel number, "Love of My Life," is showcased in a fresh arrangement, which the singer interprets in his characteristic urgent "bellowing." In effect, the song loses its endearing and reflective quality.

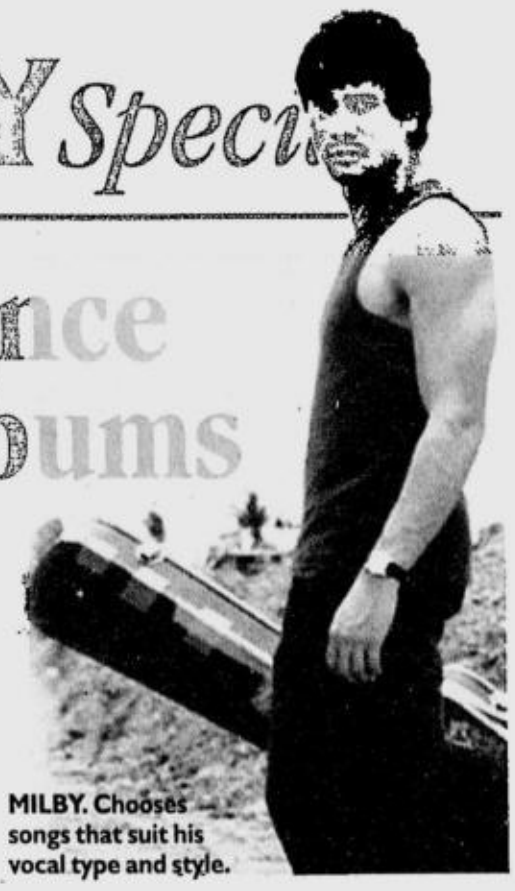
Sam's style is more satisfactorily utilized in the neo-rock arrangements of "Where Did You Go?" and "I Won't Miss This Chance," which are among the album's hit-bound tunes. Fortunately, most tracks here are chosen to suit the singer's vocal type and style.

Brickman's "Shining Star" turns out to be a rousing number, with infectious beats and a radio-friendly arrangement. The wistful "Can't Help Falling in Love" gets a waltzy reworking.

Other highlights: "Mahal Pa Rin" and "It's You All Along." Unfortunately, Milby has yet to rid himself of his less-than-endearing vocal affectations, which are characterized by his last-note grunts.

Happily, pumped-up tunes like the bumpy "It's You All Along" don't disappoint.

For all of Milby's roguish exuberance and chest-powered belting, however, one thing is certain: Sam's voice is more suited for slow-rock tunes than ballads.



MILBY. Chooses songs that suit his vocal type and style.

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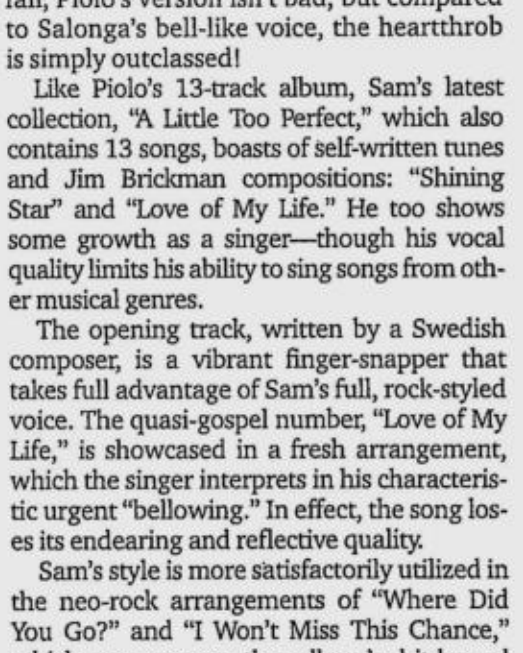


PASCUAL. Sings "Wagas," one of the most beautiful compositions this year.

Jackson Five set to reunite for performance tour

LONDON—THE Jackson Five, the group that launched the career of pop superstar, Michael Jackson, are planning to reunite for a tour as early as next year, Jermaine Jackson told BBC radio recently.

Jermaine Jackson—who appeared on the British reality television show, "Celebrity Big Brother," earlier this year—said that Michael would take part, and concert dates had already been discussed.

JACKSON FIVE. Young Michael is fourth from left.

One more time

"Michael will be involved," he told the broadcaster. "We feel we have to do it one more time. We owe it to the fans!" Jackie, Tito, Jermaine, Marlon and Michael last toured together in 1984 as The Jacksons—with six members, along with Randy Jackson—having originally formed the Jackson Five in 1965.

The group stopped touring together as Michael and sister Janet Jackson became international music superstars, and the Jackson Five formally disbanded in 1990.

Michael was acquitted of charges of child abuse two years ago, and Jermaine confirmed that the trial had delayed the reunion project.

Trial

"There's been so much going on, getting over the hurdles that we all faced during Michael's trial," explained Jermaine, who sang lead vocals in the group until Michael took over.

"But, we are stronger than ever. I'm going to say thank you so much to fans and supporters of my family in Europe, and all over the UK, especially, for their love and support."

He added that the group were "in the studio at the moment," hinting at new material. *AFP*

Dancing penguins waltz away with Bafta win

LONDON—THE DANCING penguins of "Happy Feet" have beaten Harry Potter to win the Best Film Award at this year's children's Baftas, the junior version of the annual film and television awards in the United Kngdom.

The computer-animated movie, featuring the voices of Nicole Kidman, Elijah Wood and Robin Williams, trounced the boy wizard's latest adventure, "Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix." The penguins were also up against the sewer rat comedy, "Flushed Away," and the fantasy adventure, "Bridge to Terabithia."

MUMBLE (voiced by Elijah Wood) was "Happy Feet's" cuddlesome protagonist.

Box-office hit

"Happy Feet," a box-office hit made by Warner Bros. Pictures and Australia's Village Roadshow, won the Best Animated Feature Oscar early this year.

Potter also lost out in the video game category. That prize went to "Buzz! Junior: Jungle Party," where players compete to build a banana empire to be crowned king of the jungle.

Other winners included the BBC children's channel, CBeebies (TV channel of the year); cartoon character "SpongeBob SquarePants" (international) and "In the Night Garden," the Ragdoll production featuring Igglepiggle. *Reuters*

Disparate elements dramatically converge in 'Lions for Lambs'

REDFORD, STREEP AND CRUISE. Superlative ensemble performances.

By Nestor U. Torre

"LIONS FOR LAMBS," ROBERT Redford's hard-hitting film on the Middle East conflict, utilizes a novel approach in clarifying its many issues:

Its storytelling fulcrum is provided by the central character of a political science professor, played by director Redford, who has been urging his best students to get involved in national affairs, instead of switching off as many young Americans have done.

Exceptional student

The professor starts off by trying to motivate an exceptional student to get his act together, but the brilliant but indolent youth counters that the country's leaders have failed to inspire him to do his share.

His mentor then ripostes that this isn't a matter of reacting to good example, but acting on one's own convictions. To illustrate this, the film flashes back to two of the teacher's best students—who felt so engaged that they volunteered for military service in the Middle East.

Prospects

As fate would have it, however, the two brave soldiers' prospects are negatively affected by a know-it-all senator (Tom Cruise) and his cockeyed plan to field small and tragically vulnerable units to fight in some "safer" parts of Afghanistan. Not all the engaged courage in the world can save their small force from being overwhelmed by the enemy.

Another point of view is represented by a veteran journalist (Meryl Streep) who sees the fatal flaw in the influential senator's plan, and tries hard to make him see the error of his ways.

But, he counters by pointing out that some media people are partly to blame for "selling" the war to the American public, and the chastened journalist puts her job at risk by refusing to participate in the dissemination of the senator's latest scheme.

Separate elements

These separate elements abruptly converge when the professor's former students are trapped after their mission goes awry. All of a sudden, the issues involved cease to be abstract material for a debate, but become a matter of life and death.

Yes, only two soldiers' lives are at stake, but they serve as a microcosm for the larger war itself, with its mounting list of casualties.

Director Redford's prismatic approach tends to make his film feel episodic, so it's sometimes difficult to keep track of the production's central thematic thrust as its locales shift from the academe to the senate, to the warfront.

In time, however, the movie's disparate parts congeal—with greater power and lucidity, since its different components have been previously detailed.

Yes, the office scenes are static, but they compensate for this limitation with their ability to focus on and clarify the troubling issues that prompted Redford to make this film.

Legitimate concern

Basically, "Lions for Lambs" sees the war against terror as a legitimate concern, but perceives it to have been used by some political and military leaders to legitimize their own subjective purposes—with the tacit complicity of some media individuals and organizations.

Objectives

What makes this situation appalling is the fact that it has used patriotic American troops as cannon fodder in the attainment of abstract or misguided combat strategies and objectives. If viewers agree with Redford, "Lions for Lambs" could make them, as citizens, less willing to add to the web of complicity.

This laudable potential consequence wouldn't have been achieved without the superlative ensemble performances turned in by Streep, Redford, Cruise and the movie's other principal and secondary players. They provide the human face this movie needs to be truly compelling and memorable.

Christmas wishes do come true

From page 14

Len-Len said. "Thank you!" she added, holding back her tears.

"I'm sure we'll get along well," smiled Paola. "By the way, did you make a wish after completing the *Simbang Gabi*?."

"Yes, I did. And it did come true . . . it's you," Len-Len shyly shared.

"Wow! How did that happen?," asked Paola.

"I'm new here in the city and I don't know anyone. My Christmas wish was to have a friend. And that is you. Thank you for being my friend!"

"I'm very happy to hear that," Paola replied, her eyes misting over.

"This will not only be my best Christmas gift, but also my best birthday gift—tomorrow," Len-Len revealed.

"Christmas Day is your birthday? Happy birthday, Len-Len! You must be very happy sharing your birthday with Jesus," Paola exclaimed.

"Thank you, Paola. Actually, my real name is Belen and I'm really happy to have the same birthday as His. And it is even more special, now that I have a friend!" Len-Len hugged Paola.

The two girls parted ways with smiles on their faces and they looked forward to more happy days together as friends.

That night, as Paola's mom prepared their *noche buena*, they heard a loud knock on the door.

"Who could that be?," asked Paola's mom as she walked to the door.

"Merry Christmas!," a very familiar and dearly beloved voice rang out.

"Dad! Dad!," shouted Paola as she jumped to hug and kiss her father!

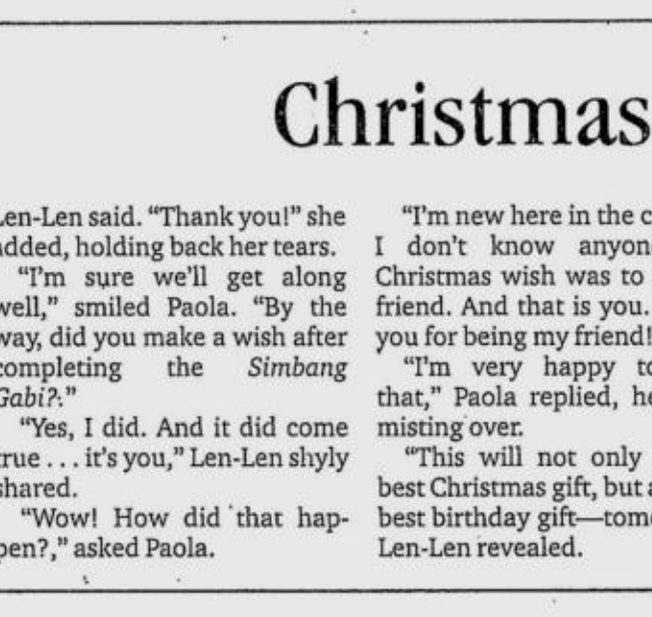
Paola couldn't contain her happiness, now that her family was complete this Christmas. She was happy that her mother's special wish had come true! After eating their sumptuous feast, her mom handed Paola a gift.

"Merry Christmas, *anak*," smiled her mom.

Paola's heart beat fast as she unwrapped her present.

"Red shoes! Oh, thank you!," Paola grinned as she hugged her parents.

It was truly a merry Christmas for Paola and her family. And, as she went to bed, she said her deepest prayer of thanks—for, indeed, Christmas wishes do come true!


Isabella
DESPERATELY
Pretending...
SOON IN THEATERS

Stephanie
DESPERATELY
In Love...
SOON IN THEATERS

Oprah stays on top of her game

NO ONE DOES CHRISTMAS BETTER than Oprah Winfrey. From the decked-out studio set to the gift-giving extravaganza, the undisputed leader of daytime television stays on top of her game with a holiday show that continues to make history every year.

For nearly a decade now, Oprah has ushered in the festive season by playing Tinseltown's Santa to unsuspecting audience members. Legions of viewers around the globe watch in awe as the talk show host doles out millions' worth of giveaways in Oprah's Favorite Things—the segment that rake in the show's best ratings.

WINFREY. Has ushered in the festive season by playing Tinseltown's Santa to unsuspecting audience members.

'Pay It Forward'

In 2006, Oprah opted to do things differently by surprising everyone with the "Pay It Forward" challenge, her "favorite giveaway ever." In lieu of the usual presents, each member of the audience received $1000 worth of gift cards to be spent on a charitable cause.

"I can honestly say that every gift I've ever given has brought at least as much happiness to me as it has to the person I've given it to. That's the feeling I want to pass on to you!," Oprah passionately shares.

But, Oprah's Favorite Things is just one of the many highlights in what has been a historic 20-year run for the top-rated talk program. Since its syndication in 1986, The Oprah Winfrey Show has never been unseated as the number one talk show for 14 consecutive seasons.

Winning streak

Upon receiving her Emmy Lifetime Achievement in 1998, Oprah decided to permanently remove herself and the show for nomination, ending her winning streak with a record of 39 Emmys.

Having cemented its reputation in global television history, "The Oprah Winfrey Show" has graciously welcomed more than 856 celebrities on stage: Julia Roberts tops the list among the most frequent female celebrity guests—with 10 appearances—while the late R&B singer, Luther Vandross, had been on the show 11 times!

But, it's not all glamour and fun at "The Oprah Winfrey Show," as its host sought to use television to make a difference. Her interest in socially relevant issues, coupled with her gift of gab, helped forward philanthropic causes in the areas of education, children and women.

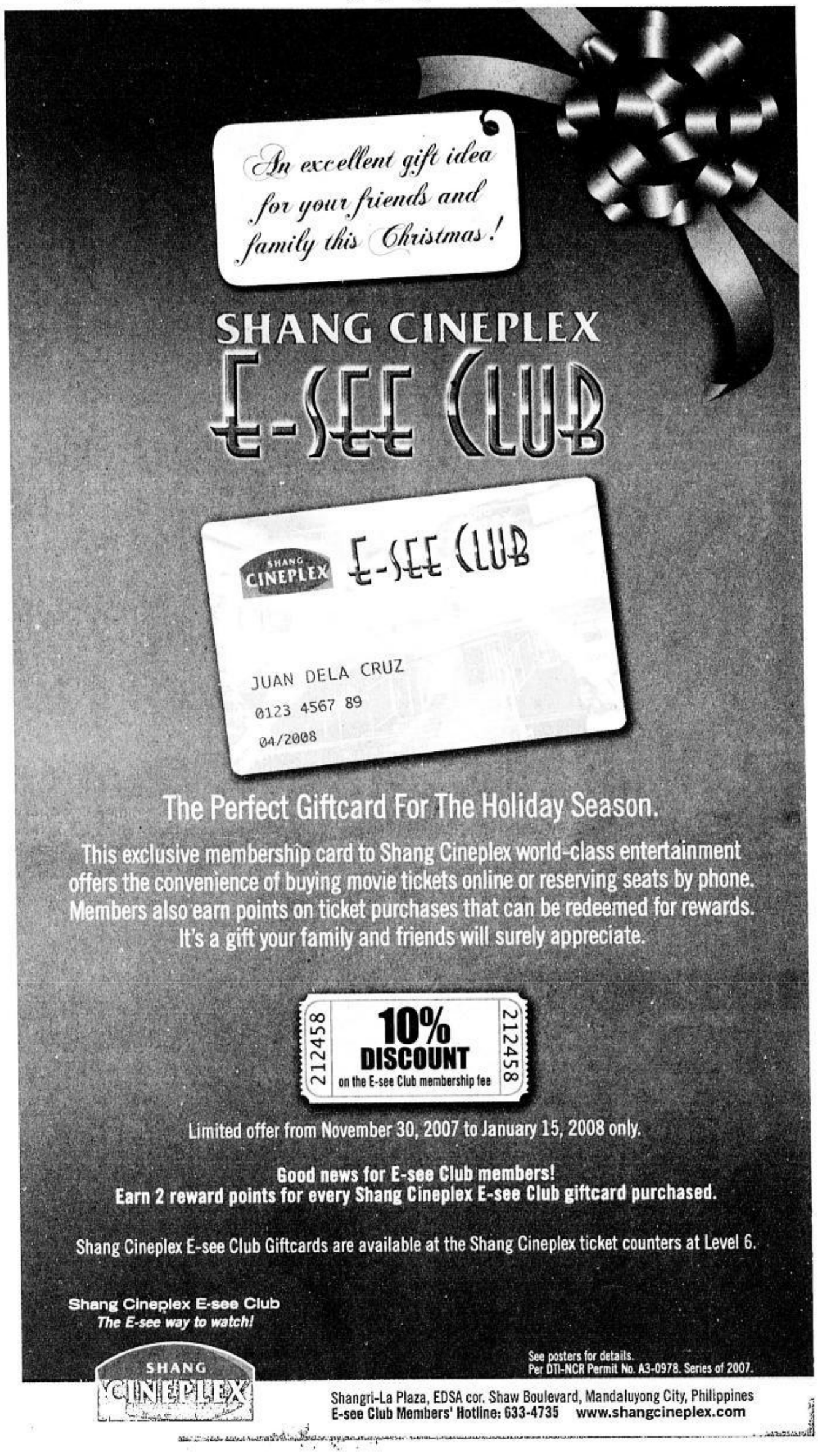
In 1997, an episode airing her campaign to encourage viewers to collect spare change for scholars and to volunteer for Habitat for Humanity paved the way for the creation of a public charity known as Oprah's Angel Network, which has now raised more than $50 million. Rockstar Jon Bon Jovi stunned Oprah by donating $1 million—the highest amount ever donated on "Oprah," in support of Hurricane Katrina relief efforts!

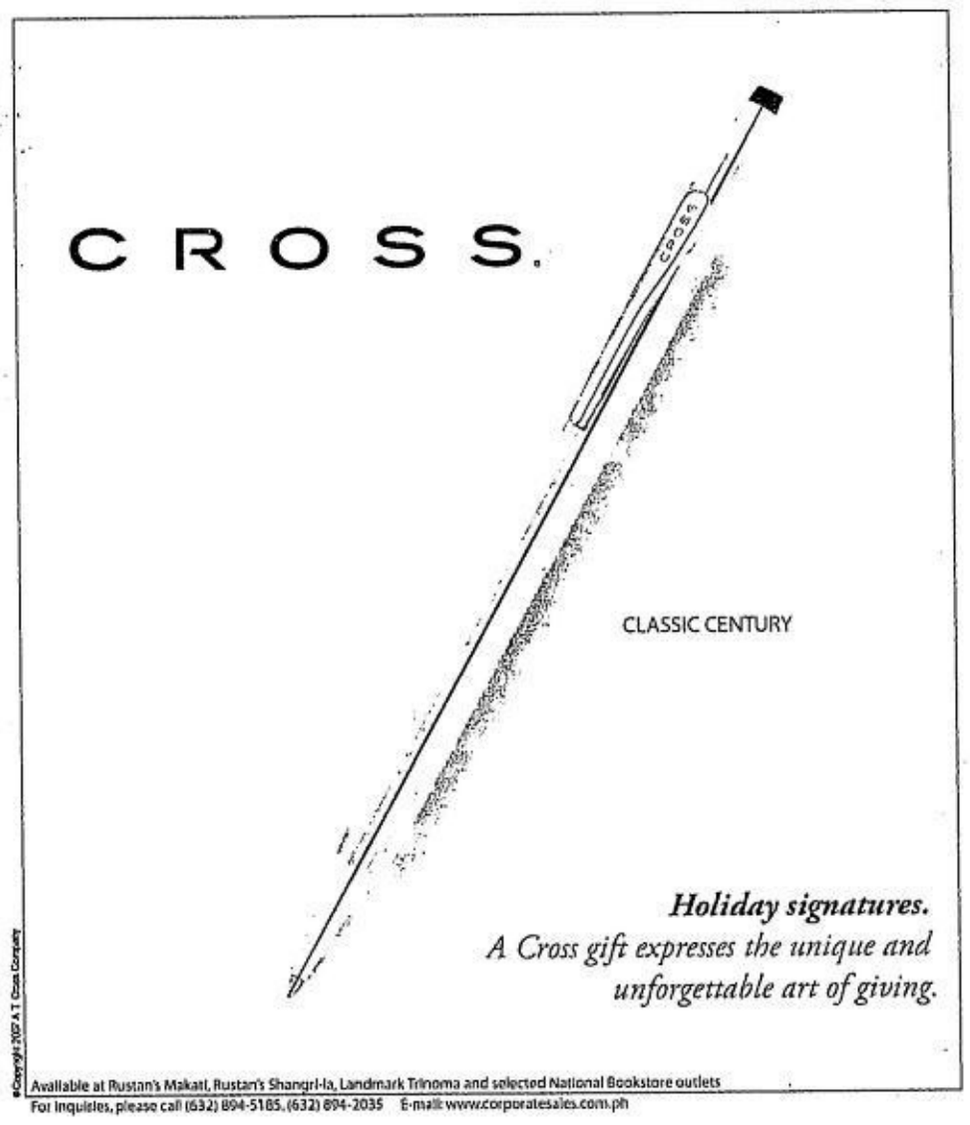
'Oprah Effect'

When Oprah speaks, the rest follows. This "Oprah Effect," has also helped various enterprises and artists to successfully take off. Apparel brand Adam+Eve's orders were said to have propelled to 12,000 after being featured in the show's "Big Ideas that Made Millions" episode.

The Oprah Book Club, which started with Jacqueline Mitchard's "The Deep End of the Ocean," has brought 38 other featured books to the top of the best-sellers list. And singer James Blunt hit a career high on the Billboard 200 after an "Oprah" guest appearance. He hasn't gone unnoticed since then.

Wondering what else Oprah will come up with? Viewers in Asia can catch "The Oprah Winfrey Show" on the Hallmark Channel during the following time slots: from Monday to Friday, 1 p.m. (daytime); Monday to Wednesday, 10 p.m. (primetime); and Sundays, 8 p.m. (primetime specials).





YULETIDE STORY FOR YOUNG READERS

Christmas wishes do come true

By Sharon Robas-Macawile

ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

DING, DONG! DING, DONG! Ding, Dong!

The church bells rang loudly as throngs of people trooped to the San Juan Bautista Parish for the traditional *Simbang Gabi*.

Paola was eager to attend the dawn masses with her mother. She was fascinated with the festive mood of the surroundings: the colorful lanterns and lights on the church's facade, Christmas carols being sung, *bibingka* and *puto bumbong* stalls lined up along the churchyard, and the cool breeze associated with the season.

Paola didn't mind waking up at dawn—and vowed not to fall asleep during the service.

"Mom, don't forget to buy my favorite *bibingka* after the mass," Paola reminded her mother as they made their way to a pew.

"I won't, my dear," her mom replied.

Excited

Paola was excited to attend the *Simbang Gabi* because her mom told her that anyone who completed the nine dawn masses would have his wish granted.

This thrilled Paola as she had one special wish. She knelt down to pray, closed her eyes and whispered: "Dear God, please make my wish come true: I wish to have a pair of red shoes this Christmas!"

During the mass, Paola joined the whole congregation in singing joyous hymns. She was very active during the service.

Suddenly, she noticed a young girl about her age sitting across the aisle. She sat quietly at the far end of the pew. She was fair-skinned, had long, black hair and wore a faded blue dress.

"What could her wish be?" Paola thought to herself.

After the mass, Paola and her mom went to buy some hot and yummy *bibingka* at one of the stalls. This became their routine every morning after attending *Simbang Gabi*.

"I wonder what your wish is," kidded Paola's mom when they reached home.

"I can't tell you mom. It's supposed to be a secret," Paola grinned.

But her mom knew how much Paola loved the red shoes they saw during one of their visits to the mall. Paola knew it would suit the dress her mom had sewn for her for Christmas.

The following morning, Paola saw the girl again, sitting quietly in a corner, her hair tied back in a ponytail with a plastic ribbon.

Toy

"Is she wishing for a toy?," Paola wondered.

At home, Paola was busy making Christmas cards for her cousins and friends. She made cards in different sizes using the paper her mom had bought her. She used her crayons to color them.

"Mom, will God really grant all our wishes?," Paola inquired while she arranged the cards she had already finished.

"He will, if you believe in Him," her mom declared. "I hope God's granting your wish is not the only reason you're attending the *Simbang Gabi* with me every morning, Paola," added her mom, quizzically.

"Oh no, Mom. Of course it would be wonderful if my wish would come true—but, more than that, I love *Simbang Gabi!* I love the smell of *bibingka*, the Christmas carols, and I like guessing people's wishes just by looking at them," Paola said proudly.

"You what?" chuckled her mother.

"Yes!, I'm sure most of the churchgoers are excited about getting their wishes granted after attending nine days of *Simbang Gabi*. For example, there's this man whose hair is starting to thin. I'm sure he's asking God to give him thicker hair! Then, there's this old lady who always sits next to us who seem to have difficulty speaking because she has no teeth. I bet she's asking God to make her some," Paola narrated as her mother laughed out loud.

"And there's this boy who sings very, very loud—but out of tune! He's probably wishing he had a beautiful voice. God can do that, can't he?," Paola continued, not minding her mom's continuous laughter.

"And, there's another boy who makes funny faces at everyone in church. He probably wants to become a clown at children's parties, and wishes that he'll grow up soon to fulfill his dream!"

"You've seen all these during Mass?," her mom exclaimed. "Oh, Paola," she sighed.

Mother and daughter laughed endlessly as Paola related more stories about the people she saw inside the church. Then, she shared in a sad tone:

"But there is this girl whose wish I find difficult to guess."

"What do you mean, difficult? I'm sure you know what most kids love to have," her mother smiled.

"But, she's different . . . I thought she might be wishing for a toy—but there's something *else*," Paola sighed.

The next morning, Paola was expecting to see the girl seated in her corner again. She wanted to see if she would be able to guess what the girl's Christmas wish could be.

"There she is... hmm...does she want a doll? A dress?" Paola asked herself. She didn't know.

But, she was quite sure that, whatever it was, the girl must be eager for that wish to come true.

Mall

One day, Paola and her mom visited the mall. Paola saw the red shoes again, and she couldn't take her eyes off them. Her mother saw how Paola gazed at the shoes but she just smiled and pretended she didn't notice.

"Mom, do you also have a Christmas wish?," asked Paola while she and her mother sat at the mall's play area.

"Of course I do. Can you guess what it is?" teased her mother.

"Hmm, let me think," replied Paola as she stared at her mom. "You wish for Dad to be with us on Christmas?"

"Well, yes. But we both know that he still has one more year to finish his work abroad before he can come home to spend Christmas with us," her mother replied with sadness in her eyes.

"Aha, *now* I know! You want to buy me an ice cream cone today because you know I *love* ice cream!," said Paola, giggling as she ran toward the kiosk nearby. Her mother laugh heartily.

On the last day of *Simbang Gabi*, Paola was even more excited. In fact, she couldn't sleep well the night before because of so much anticipation.

Crowd

As in the previous days, the crowd gathered in the church had grown in number. There were even some who settled themselves outside with their own chairs in tow.

Inside, all of the pews were full of people. Paola and her mom had a hard time passing through the crowd and it took them sometime to be able to find empty seats inside. When they finally did, Paola knelt and fervently said her "prayer wish" for the last time.

Before the mass started, Paola looked around and saw the shy girl standing at the far end of the aisle. Something told her to ask the girl to sit beside her.

"Come here! Hurry!," Paola whispered as she waved to the girl.

"What is it, Paola? The mass is about to start," her mother scolded her.

"The girl, mom, she's here. I'll ask her to sit beside me," said Paola.

The girl didn't move from where she stood. But, when Paola looked at her again and signaled for her to come, she quietly walked toward Paola's seat.

"Hi," whispered Paola as she moved closer to her mom to make room for the girl. "I'm Paola. I always see you here during *Simbang Gabi*."

Bell

The girl stared at Paola, dumbfounded. Before she could say a word, the bell rang to signal the start of the celebration. Paola sang her heart out as the girl stood beside her.

When the time to sing the Lord's Prayer came, Paola held the girl's hand as they sang together.

Before the mass ended, Fr. Carlos reminded everyone: "I'm sure most if not all of you are excited to find out if your wishes will come true, now that *Simbang Gabi* is over. Remember always that, with faith in God, nothing is impossible. May the true spirit of Christmas fill your hearts with joy!"

Choir

The crowd applauded as the choir sang "Joy to the World."

"What is your name?" Paola asked the girl as they left the church.

"My name is Len-Len," the girl said.

"Do you like *bibingka*? I love it! My mom and I will buy some. Do you want to come?," asked Paola as she noticed that Len-Len did not have anyone with her.

"Sure. Actually, my mother sells *bibingka* outside the church," replied Len-Len.

"Really? That's great? I'll tell mom to buy *bibingka* there," said Paola.

In turned out that the *bibingka* stall they frequented belonged to Len-Len's mom. Paola found out Len-Len's family came from the province and were new in the city. It would be Len-Len's first time to celebrate Christmas away from her hometown.

"You'll love it here in the city," shared Paola, as she and Len-Len sat on a bench while eating *bibingka*. "We can be friends."

"Really?," a very surprised

CHRISTMAS/ I2

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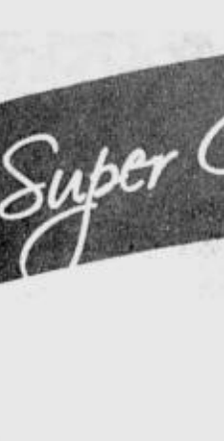

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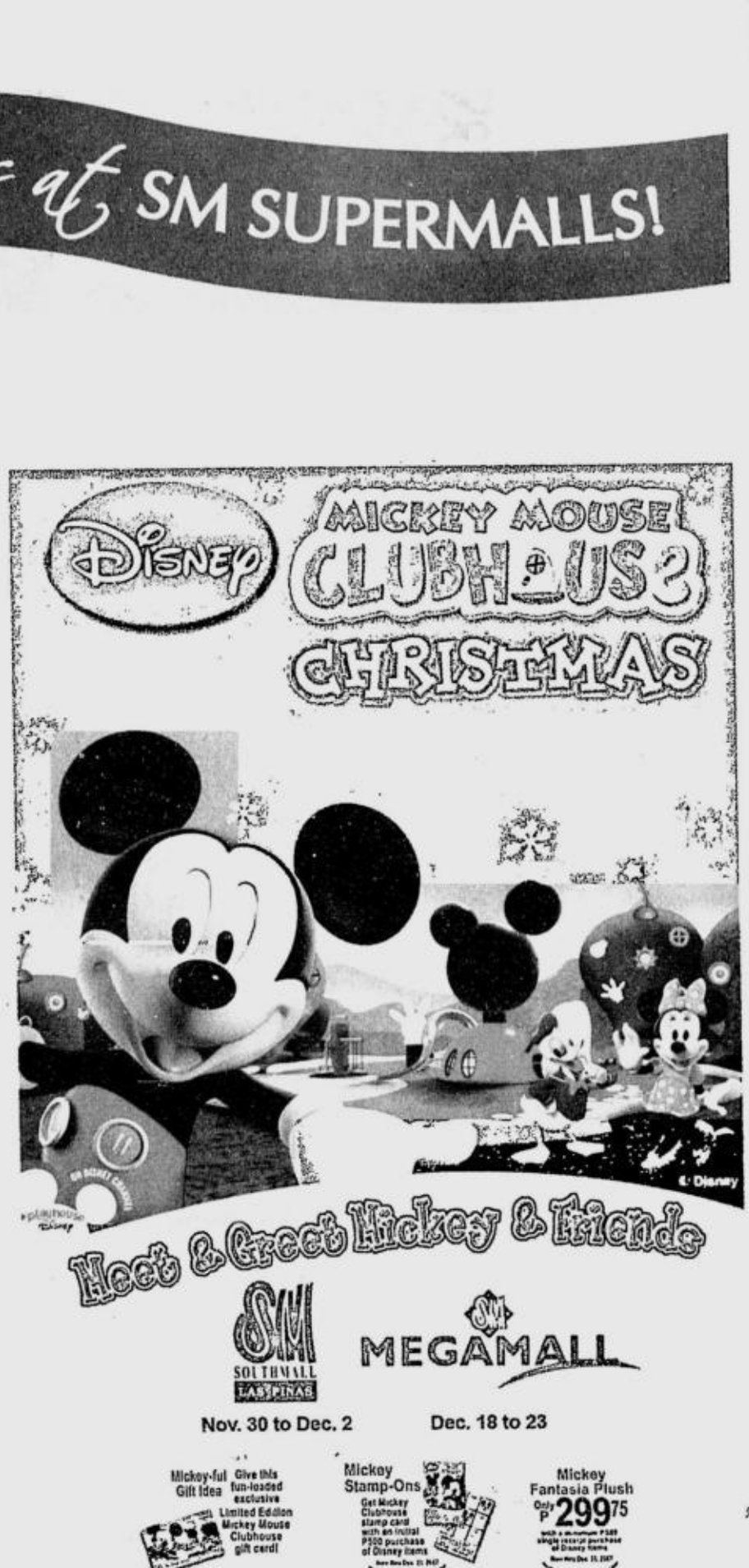

SM SUPERMALLS

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SPARKS. Wants to find the right balance of songs that both adults and kids will enjoy listening to. AP

'Idol' Jordin Sparks utilizes youthful charm in debut album

NEW YORK—WHEN TEEN music stars approach the age of consent, they often test the boundaries of what's appropriate by taking on projects with adult content. "American Idol" champ, Jordin Sparks, took the opposite approach as she sought out material for her CD debut.

"I wasn't sure what I wanted to sing about," Sparks states, "but I knew what I didn't want to sing about! I wanted to stay away from 'Oh, put your hands all over me'—type of songs, because I haven't experienced that yet, so the fact that I would sing it would be really dumb—plus, I don't feel comfortable singing stuff like that," Sparks, who turns 18 this month, said with a giggle.

Striking good looks

It's that kind of wholesome charm—along with her powerhouse voice and striking good looks—that endeared her to "American Idol's" viewers this year, making her the youngest winner in the TV phenomenon's six-season history, after defeating semifinalist Blake Lewis. And, on her self-titled Jive Records debut, record executives—and Sparks herself—wanted to make sure she retained that sweet-as-pie image.

"She's one of the most beautiful people I've ever met on this planet—you immediately get a sense of who she is and her values," gushes Jive's Jeff Fenster, who helped Sparks and her management team select songs for the album.

"You have to make a record that represents who the artist is. We tried to keep that in mind from the beginning of the process," he explains. "I said to her from the beginning, a big part of my goal was to help her make a record that she would be proud of, and I think she felt that way at the end of the day!"

Talent competition

To that end, the "Jordin Sparks" CD is decidedly family friendly—much like the talent competition that launched her career. Thanks to her "American Idol" success—and her age—Sparks' fan base has a large kid contingent. But, this particular fan base also includes parents and grandparents who, along with their children, watched as the Arizona teen went from a potential also-ran to the odds-on favorite to win the "Idol" crown.

Sparks wanted to make sure that she didn't alienate any age group with the material she chose. "I never thought of targeting a specific audience," Sparks elaborates. "I do love the little girls who excitedly come up to me, but I also like meeting the older women who say they like me! It's really cool!," she enthuses. "I merely want to make good music, so hopefully, we'll find the right balance of songs that both adults and little kids will enjoy listening to!"

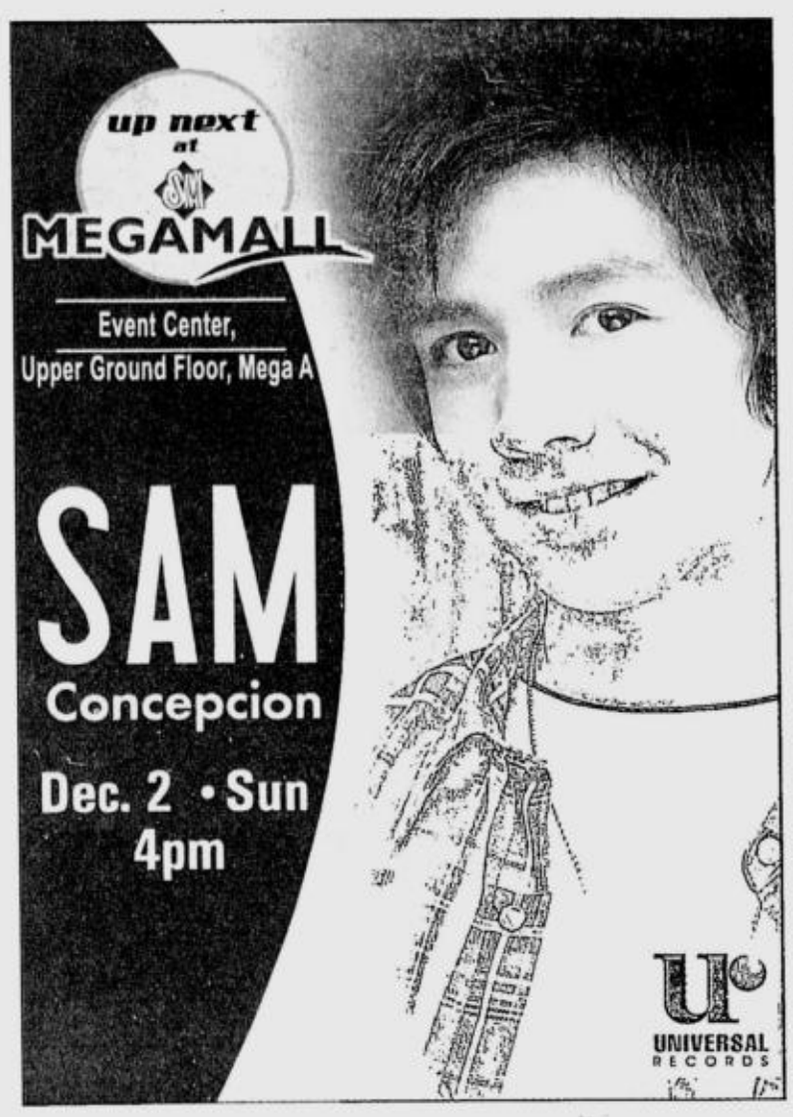
It looks like she has found that balance on "Jordin Sparks," a thoroughly pop CD with a mix of romantic ballads, dance grooves and inspirational anthems. The album's first single, the guitar-infused "Tattoo," got a slow start on radio, but it has been steadily rising on the Billboard pop chart—and is now a certified top 20 hit!

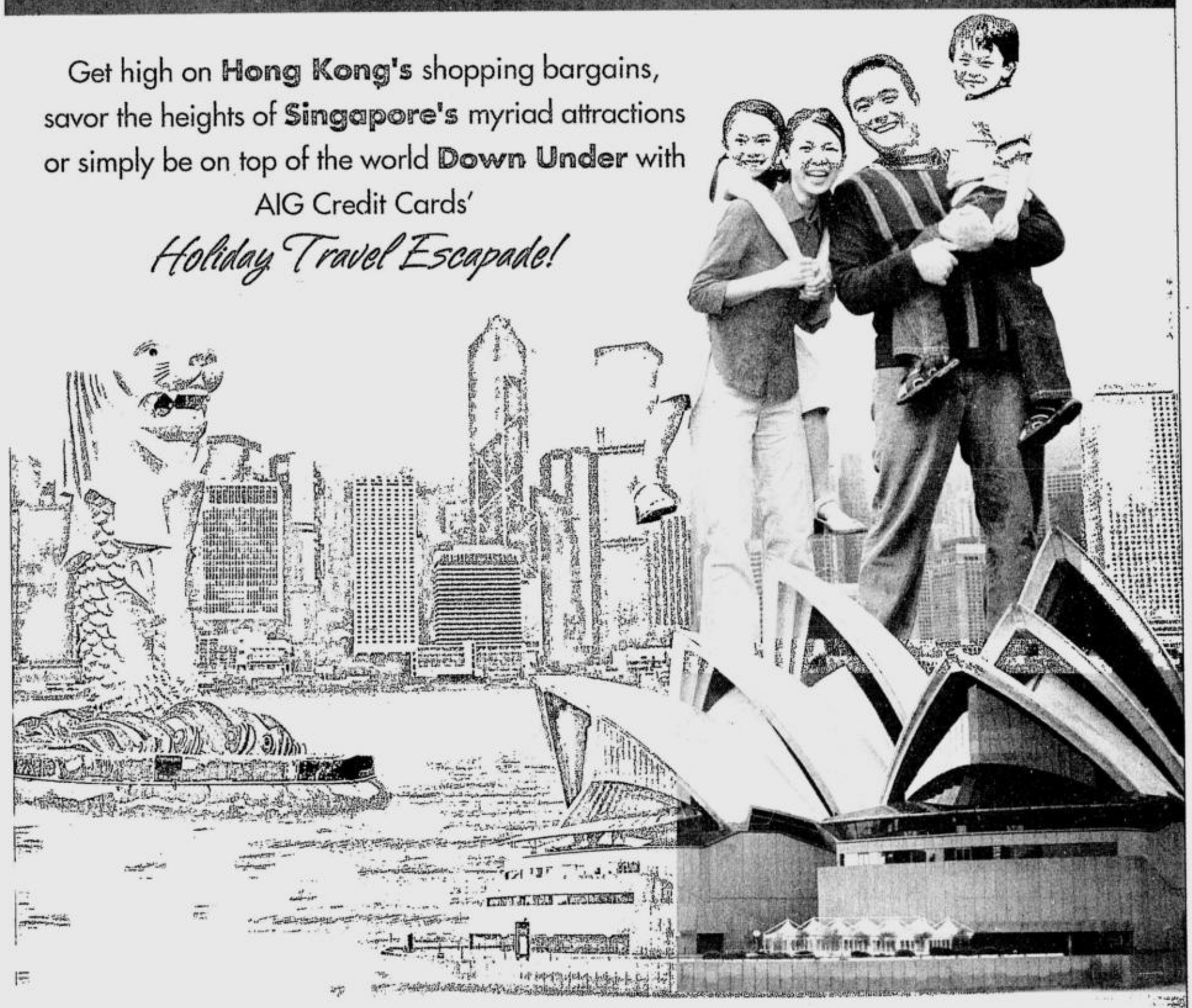
Contribution

The CD was crafted with the help of pop music's top producers, including Stargate, the team behind Beyonce Knowles' ubiquitous "Irreplaceable." But, Sparks makes it clear that her contribution was more than mere vocals—the collection also includes a cowriting credit in one of the album's 13 tracks.

"I feel lucky because I had a lot of say in

'IDOL'/ J3





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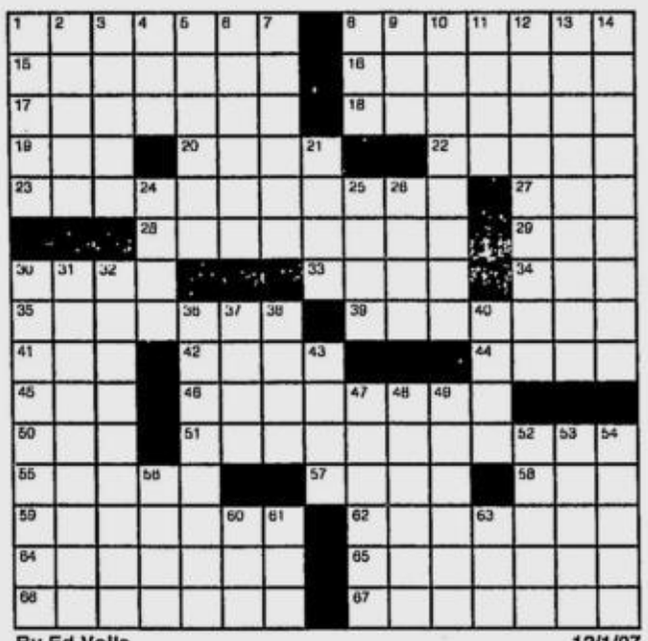
DAILY CROSSWORD



ACROSS
1 Isaac's father
8 Forage crop
15 Holy war
16 Bernstein or Nimoy
17 Hoaxes
18 Found
19 New GI
20 Clock face
22 State
23 Bikini tests
27 Threshold
28 Daughter of Oedipus
29 In medias __
30 Like horse's hooves
33 Emulate eagles
34 Med. personnel
35 Mulls over
39 Affliction
41 Group of docs
42 Tibetan spiritual leader
44 Law court opening word
45 Cook bk. item
46 Surfacing
50 Tic-toe tie
51 Like some cases?
55 Laxative from aloe
57 River into the Wash
58 NASA's ISS partner
59 Unit of electrical charge
62 Movie director Frank
64 Deprive of fortitude
65 Following
66 Put to sea
67 Veteran seafarers

DOWN
1 Capital of Ghana
2 Leaflike plant part
3 Approach quickly
4 Botanist Gray
5 __-Simmons University
6 Narcotics user
7 Iron-rich mountain range
8 That's __ folks!
9 August sign
10 Lens adjusters
11 Med. school subj.
12 Like Mormon saints
13 Like Amy Lowell's poetry
14 Postal information
21 Cabin material
24 Road safety grp.
25 State of mind
26 __ B'rith
30 Kirk Douglas movie
31 Macaulay Culkin movie
32 For credit
36 Old-time actress Duse
37 Freeway entrance
38 Captain Hook's mate
40 Geological periods
43 Cartoonist Peter
47 Fries lightly
48 Loony
49 Port on the Black Sea
52 Sun: pref.
53 Calling into play
54 Strong flavors
56 French islands
60 Twice DIII
61 Barbara __ Geddes
63 Paul Newman movie

By Ed Volle
Gillette, WY

12/1/07

Friday's Puzzle Solved

B	E	F	O	G		P	L	A	N		F	U	J	I
A	R	O	A	R		H	A	R	E		E	L	A	L
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Y	E	R		D	E	N	N	I	S	G	R	E	E	N
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C	O	C	O	N	U	T		S	C	A	R			
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M	E	D	S		D	Y	E	D		A	N	K	H	S

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HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're extremely witty and humorous. In large measure, this is because you understand the psychology of people. You get involved in your world. You want to make a difference, and you're not afraid to speak up. You're generous with your time, your money and your possessions. You love to socialize and flirt. In the year ahead, you learn or study something valuable.
Birthdate of: Lee Trevino, golfer; Woody Allen, writer/director; Bette Midler, singer/actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Conversations with friends and partners are warm and joyful today. Yesterday's disappointments are a thing of the past. People will help you, and vice versa.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You definitely can benefit from the wealth and property of others today. Furthermore, people are inclined to do favors for you or let you use what they own. Bonus! (Go after what you want.)

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): This is a fun-loving day. It's a great day for parties and social occasions. It's also a wonderful day for romance—which could heat up, incidentally. Things are looking good! (Take a mini vacation.)

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Today feels quite different from yesterday. Your enthusiasm for life has returned. Now you're ready to work and be productive. Even your health feels better.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): It's party time! Flirtations, sports, fun occasions, the arts and show business can flourish in a dazzling way today. You're happy to be alive.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): This is a wonderful day for real estate deals. Similarly, it's a wonderful day for family discussions or domestic plans, especially about family businesses Be confident

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You're so smooth and convincing today! No one can resist you. If you teach, act or are in sales, you're hot! New friends are joyful additions in your life now.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): This is a fine time for business, commerce or financial transactions. Whatever you do or buy will probably create a profit for you in the future.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Things couldn't be better for you. Everyone wants to see your face. Your popularity shines. Life is good. It's true; there's no time like the pleasant.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Solitude in beautiful surroundings will please you today. Interactions with authority figures, parents and bosses will also be productive. You're patient and easygoing.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): All group activities are favored today. Sports, classes, conferences, conventions will be upbeat, enthusiastic and pleasurable for you. Yay!

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Important people are impressed with you today. Because of this, you'll get the resources and the support you need. People think you're the cat's pajamas. And, of course, you are. Demand the advantage!

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis SudoKu By Dave Green

			9				8	
		7		8				9
	2		4			6		
5		3						
	6			4			1	
						8		4
		9			3		4	
2				7		3		
	5				1			

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Difficulty Level ★★★★ 12/01

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

9	2	4	8	5	3	1	7	6
6	5	3	1	4	7	8	9	2
8	1	7	6	9	2	3	5	4
7	6	2	9	3	5	4	1	8
3	9	1	4	8	6	5	2	7
4	8	5	2	7	1	6	3	9
2	4	8	3	1	9	7	6	5
1	7	9	5	6	4	2	8	3
5	3	6	7	2	8	9	4	1

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Difficulty Level ★★★★ 11/30

'Idol' Jordin Sparks utilizes . . .

From page J1

what the album was going to sound like," she discloses. "I relate to a lot of the songs in it!" That's especially true of one her more personal songs, "God Loves Ugly," about overcoming insecurity about appearance.

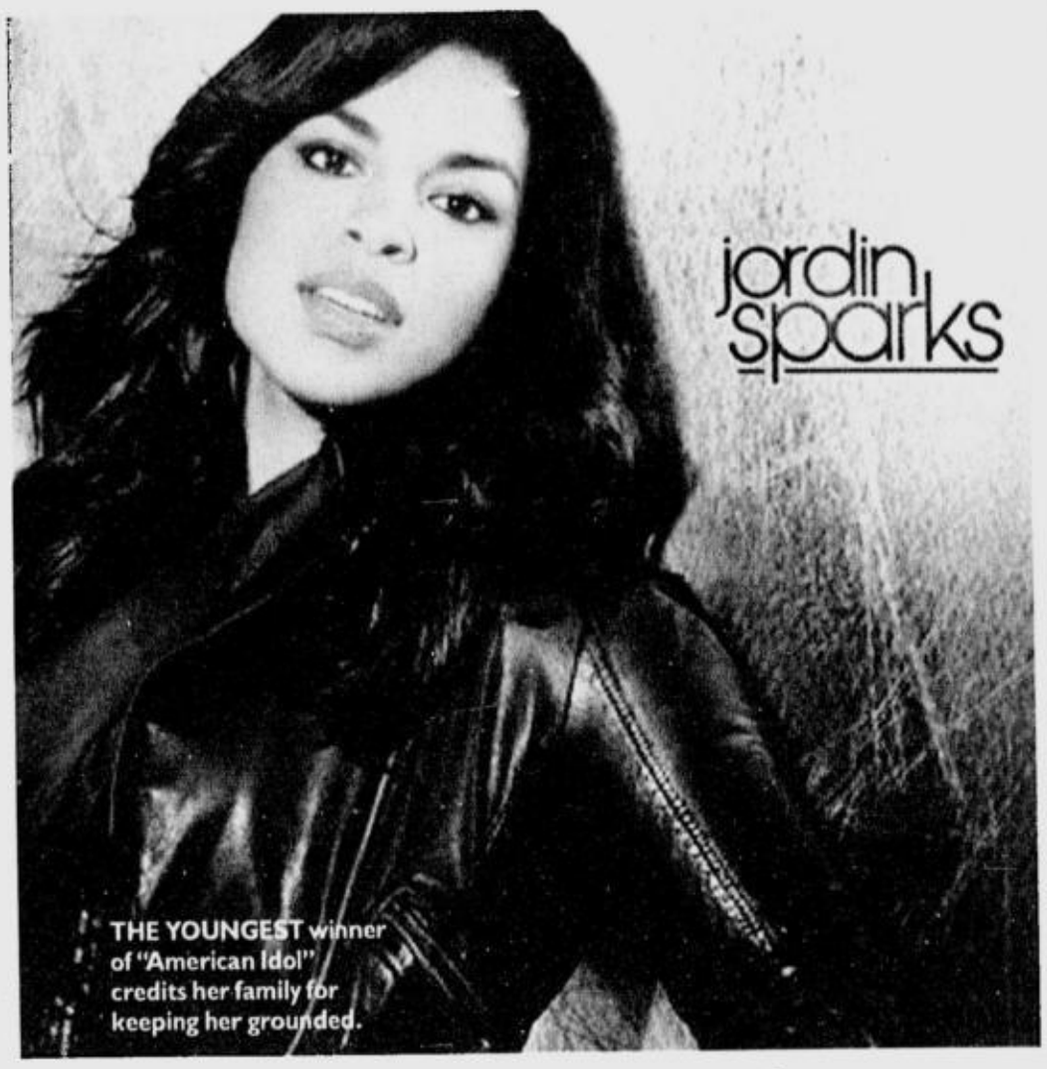
The song may seem like an odd choice for the young beauty, but the song resonated with the young singer, especially after she endured criticism from an overzealous weight watcher for her full figure after she won the "Idol" crown.

It's this levelheadedness that Sparks seems to apply to the whirlwind that has become her life since her "Idol" run this year. She credits her close-knit family with keeping her grounded: Sparks (the daughter of former NFL player, Phillippi Sparks) always has one of her family members by her side, and relies on their guidance when things start to get unwieldy.

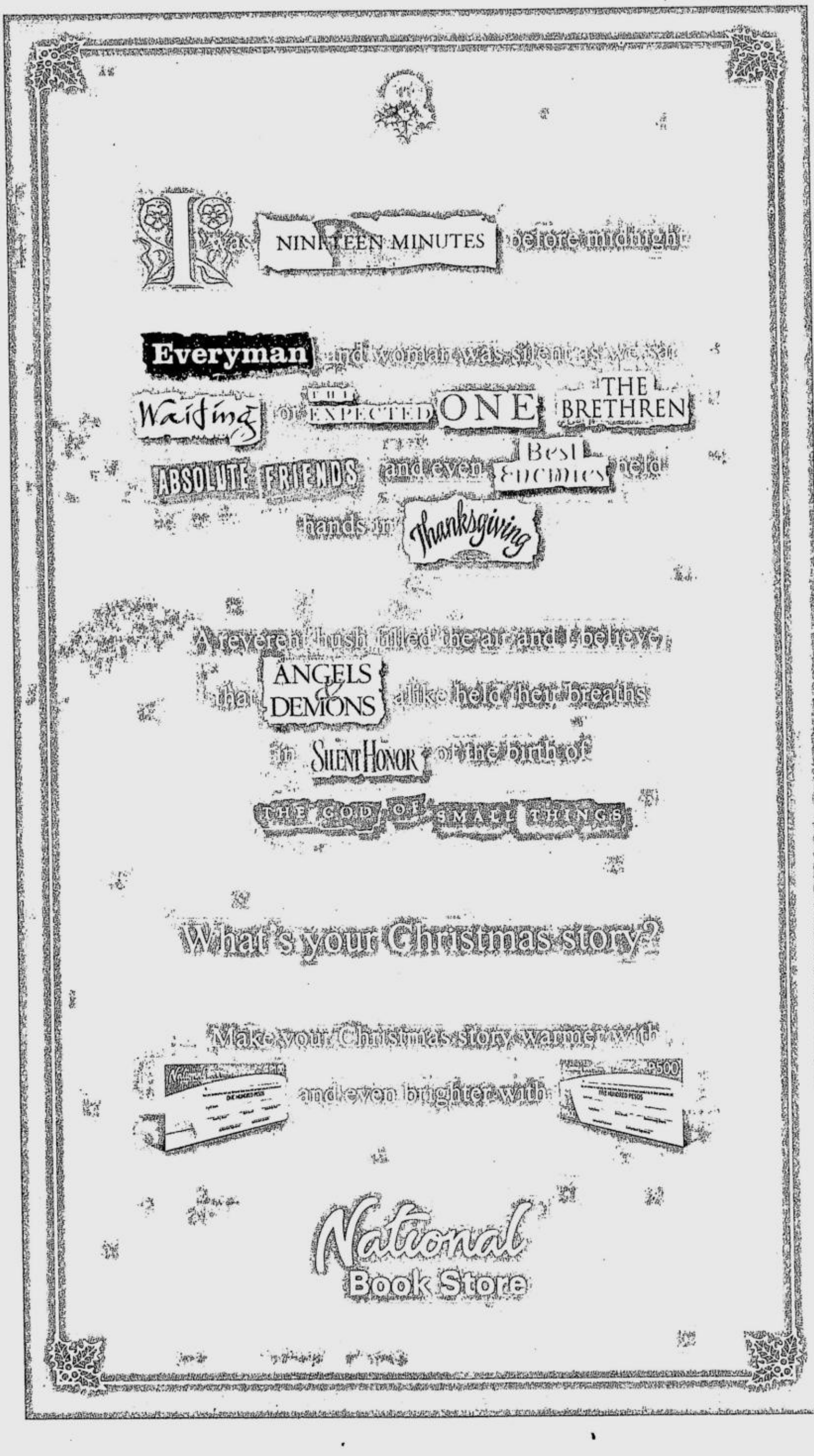
Spotlight

The next few months will be particularly grueling for the young singer, as she promotes her debut album, which also represents the biggest test of her young career: Will she follow the multiplatinum path of "Idol" winners, Carrie Underwood and Kelly Clarkson, or suffer a Taylor Hicks fate and fade from the spotlight?

Even Sparks admits that the whole thing "is a little scary." But, she thinks her youth has given her an advantage. "That's the point of this career. I'm excited because of my age—I can always grow!" *AP*



THE YOUNGEST winner of "American Idol" credits her family for keeping her grounded.



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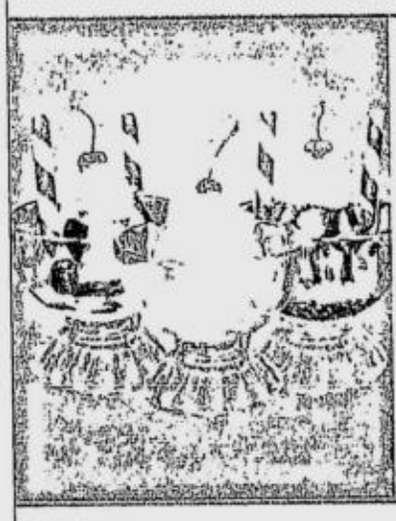

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SATURDAY*Special*

Tintin's story

By Nestor U. Torre

CHRISTINE BERSOLA-BABAO, TINTIN to her friends and fans, is mighty proud of her latest book for young readers, "The Story of Christine." This time around, her target readership is a bit older—girls in their adolescence or early teens.

In addition, Tintin's story is more personal, because the problem she tackles also confronted her when she was growing up.

In "The Story of Christine," the young principal female character describes herself as an "ugly duckling" ridiculed by her schoolmates for not being *tisay,* and of being stout and taller than her peers.

Insecurities

Like many adolescents, Christine is overwhelmed by insecurities and places great weight on what people think and say about them, even if their comments have little basis in fact.

By being so candid about her insecurities and self-doubt, Christine makes her story and predicament hugely empathetic for adolescents and teens, and provides the key service of verbalizing the worries young people have, so that they're finally brought out in the open and can more easily be addressed and alleviated.

Christine herself shows the way out of this morass of conflicting emotions: For once, she stops listening to what others say about her, and focuses instead on what she thinks of herself!

Plus points

She singles out her plus points, instead of her perceived or real flaws—she's artistic, cares for people, has a good heart, is a top-notch student and a natural leader, etc.

Healed by this inspired self-evaluation, Christine presents herself as a role model for other young people to focus on their assets rather than their liabilities. Life really isn't as simple as this, but Christine's self-transformation is inspiring, all the same.

For one thing, it rejects modern society's emphasis on shallow factors like looks, trendy dressing, acquisitiveness and "popularity."

Self-worth

It shows other young people that self-worth is really what it's all about, and the sooner they look into themselves and like what they see, the better for them.

It's good that Tintin has chosen to focus on the adolescent age group, because there's very little being written for it on the local scene.

Since this age group is more problematic than others, every little bit is most welcome, and we hope that other writers will also come up with instructive and inspiring stories for 'tweeners and teens to enjoy, get moved by—and learn valuable lessons from!

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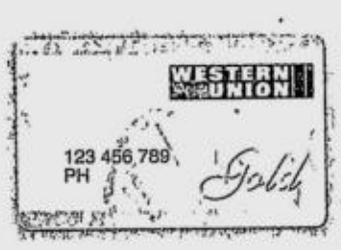

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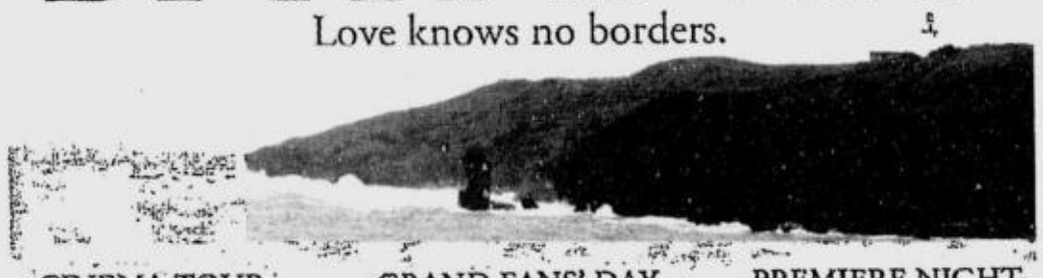

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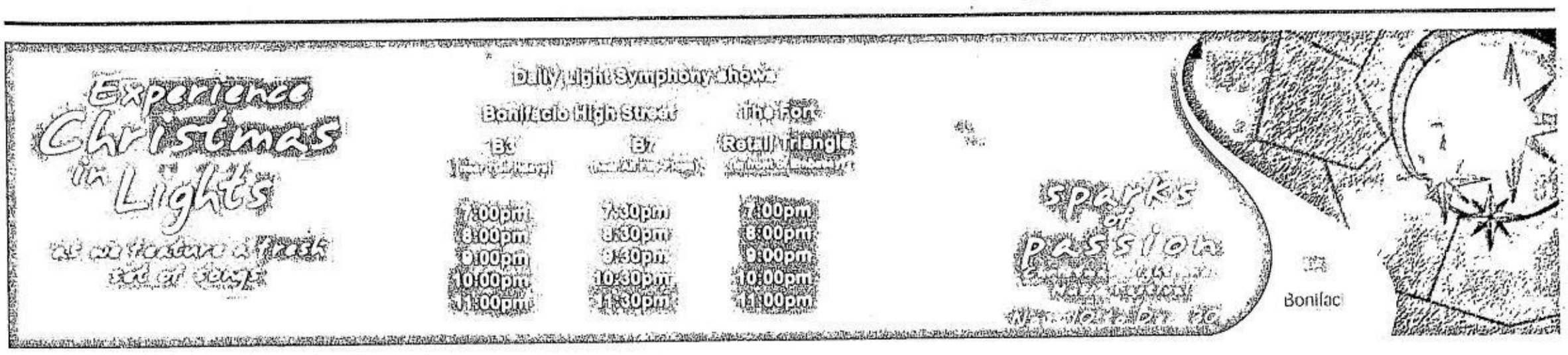

Why top comedians make us laugh —or don't

By Nestor U. Torre

MAKING PEOPLE LAUGH IS ONE of the most difficult challenges faced by entertainers, so we doff our hats off to the country's most gifted comedians. It's interesting to note, however, that they use very different techniques to tickle viewers' funnybones.

Take the country's Comedy King, Dolphy. At the height of his popularity, he was an amazingly versatile performer, going from skits, cross-dressing gags, secret-agent spoofs, "retarded" comedy, funny translations of lyrics, playing the Filipino Everyman on TV—plus, singing and dancing, to boot!

Contemporary events

Viewers also liked his satirical take-offs on contemporary events, characters and trends, and his longtime partnership with his comic "sidekick," Panchito.

On a more personal note, the "funny-faced" comedian turned out to be, quite unexpectedly, a hit with the ladies, fathering some 15 children with a number of them, none of whom he married.

These days, however, Dolphy has banked his fires, both in terms of romantic ardor and career, so his current performances are only a pale shadow of his comedic range and verve from the '50s to the '80s. When all is said and done, however, the Comedy King is a tough act to follow.

Which is not to say that there are only a few contenders for Dolphy's title. **Vic Sotto**, another comedian who's a hit with the ladies, plays it more macho and with-it. Of late, he's scored direct hits in the movies with his fantasy-comedy blockbusters in the Metro Manila Film Festival.

Comparisons

For his part, Michael V is younger and more puckish in his spoofing style. He also conjures up comparisons to Dolphy due to his wide range of comedic characterizations—a number of them female.

On TV, his comedy shows, "Bubble Gang" and "Bitoy's Funniest Videos," click with viewers, further adding to his stellar clout.

WHY/K2

MICHAEL V. Wide range of comedic characterizations.

CARICATURE BY STEPH BRAVO

DOLPHY. Tough act to follow.

CARICATURE BY LA MISTADES

CARICATURE BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

SOTTO. Has scored direct hits in the movies with his fantasy-comedy blockbusters.

Why top comedians...

From page K1

Michael's "sparring partner," Ogie Alcasid, is best known as a singer-composer, but he's also a standout laughsmith. His comedic style is more gentle and wistful than Michael's, which makes for nice contrast in their scenes together.

Adding to Ogie's cachet as a performer is the fact that he has a serious, insightful side, which serves him well in the dramatic portrayals that he very infrequently essays. For instance, the singer-actor won raves for his intense portrayal of the title character in Nonoy Gallardo's musical, "Sino Ka Ba, Jose Rizal?"

Master impersonator Willie Nepomuceno is in a class all his own. His deftly insightful impersonations of a veritable rogues' gallery of Filipino icons is unbeatable, because they capture, not just their looks, voices and idiosyncrasies, but also their souls—or lack thereof!

WHY/K3

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8 ONE MORE CHANCE
9 FRED CLAUSE
10 MONA SINGAPORE ESCORT
11 PASUKOB
12 HITMAN

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2 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
3 ONE MORE CHANCE
4 HITMAN
5 ENCHANTED
6 BEOWULF
7 FRED CLAUSE
8 BOOGEYMAN 2
9 30 DAYS OF NIGHT
10 PASUKOB
11 MONA SINGAPORE ESCORT
12 THE GAME PLAN

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4 HITMAN
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7 THE KINGDOM
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3 FRED CLAUSE
4 ENCHANTED
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5 FRED CLAUSE
6 ENCHANTED
7 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
8 BEOWULF
9 MONA SINGAPORE ESCORT

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416
1 THE KINGDOM
2 FRED CLAUSE
3 PASUKOB
4 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
5 ONE MORE CHANCE
6 THE GAME PLAN
7 BEOWULF
8 ENCHANTED
9 HITMAN
10 MONA SINGAPORE ESCORT

NOW OPEN
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1 PASUKOB
2 FRED CLAUSE
3 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
4 THE KINGDOM

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240
1 HITMAN
2 BEOWULF
3 ONE MORE CHANCE
4 PASUKOB
5 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
6 THE KINGDOM
7 FRED CLAUSE
8 ENCHANTED
9 ONE MORE CHANCE
10 THE GAME PLAN
11 30 DAYS OF NIGHT
12 MONA SINGAPORE ESCORT

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2 PASUKOB
3 ONE MORE CHANCE

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1 ENCHANTED
2 ONE MORE CHANCE
3 PASUKOB
4 BEOWULF

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2 BEOWULF/ HITMAN
3 MONA SINGAPORE ESCORT
4 ONE MORE CHANCE
5 LIONS FOR LAMBS/ ENCHANTED
6 PASUKOB

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2 ONE MORE CHANCE
3 PASUKOB
4 ENCHANTED

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2 BEOWULF
3 30 DAYS OF NIGHT
4 LIONS FOR LAMBS
5 ENCHANTED
6 ONE MORE CHANCE
7 RESERVED
8 RESERVED

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7 PASUKOB
8 ONE MORE CHANCE

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2 30 DAYS OF NIGHT
3 ENCHANTED
4 ONE MORE CHANCE

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PASUKOB 12:30 | 2:45 5:00 | 7:15 | 9:00
BEOWULF 1:35 | 4:10 6:45 | 9:20
ENCHANTED 1:45 | 4:20 6:55 | 9:30
HITMAN 1:50 | 4:20 6:50 | 9:20
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The eye as diagnostic tool

LOTUS POND

R. Valencia and S. Bismark

CAN THE EYE BE A WINDOW TO THE stomach? Or the bones? Yes, as iridology proves.

Some friends visited two iridologists, who gave diagnoses of their conditions by simply looking at their eyes—or specifically, their irises. The iridologists pointed out physical problems only the patients knew about.

Problem

Here are our friends' observations: "The iridologist told me I had liver problem, and he asked me to get an ultrasound, which revealed a cyst!" "He asked, 'Do you have a problem with your right ovary?' Sure enough, my right ovary had been operated on for blockage of blood flow by a cyst!"

Another friend related how the iridologist asked her to get an abdominal ultrasound, and another one for the reproductive organs. The result showed a cyst in the right ovary.

Furthermore, he inquired if she had injured her left knee or hip—and he was right! My friend had had a hip injury one month earlier! Then, he was told his body was laden with toxins—which a subsequent laboratory test confirmed!

Indeed, our eyes are not only for seeing, they're also used to reflect other health-related conditions. Moreover, iridology is quick and noninvasive. Why don't you try it?

Why top comedians...

From page K2

A lot of research, rehearsals and good judgment is needed to come up with such mimetic gems, so we hope that more people realize that we have a veritable national treasure of pop "infotainment" in Willie Nep.

On the other hand, many younger comedians are turn-offs because they are too lazy to do the work involved, and just wing it with slapstick or sarcastic "humor"—and end up with (rotten) egg on their faces.

Or else, they're one-note performers who keep doing their limited and predictable routines for years, until they end up as sad, trite caricatures of themselves.

It's time for them to take their cue from our genuine masters of comedy and pay their dues, if they want to be tomorrow's stars of comedy. Otherwise, the laugh's on *them*!

GIANT BEARS IN "THE GOLDEN COMPASS"

The giant polar bears in "THE GOLDEN COMPASS" are incredibly lifelike. More convincing and more realistic than the giant ape created by Peter Jackson for the movie "*King Kong*".

Both films used the same state-of-the-art CGI technology to bring giant animals to life.

But according to director **Chris Weitz** it was more difficult to create the giant bears because unlike "King Kong", the giant bears in THE GOLDEN COMPASS are highly intelligent. They can talk and show emotions. They are fierce warriors fighting with special skills and these are hard to capture on screen.

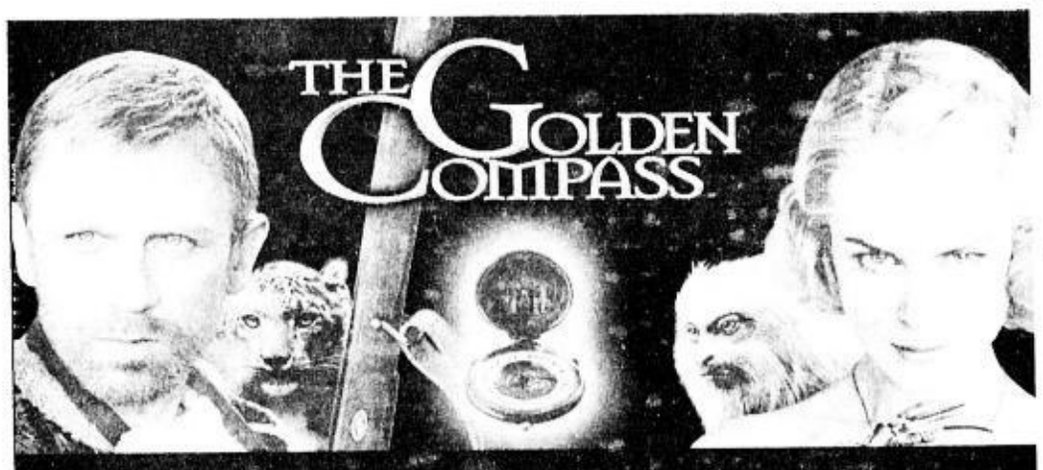
The fight scene between **Iorek Raknison**, the good bear and **Iofur Raknison** - the evil bear, is one the most spectacular *mano y mano* battles you will ever see on the big screen.

Aside from the giant bears, the film features superior special effects more spectacular than "*The Lord of the Rings*" a film which NEW LINE CINEMA also produced a few years back.

Years before the film started production, Weitz visited director Peter Jackson's WETA STUDIO. After consulting with Jackson, he realized it was impossible to bring the book to the movie screen. Weitz announced his resignation as director of THE GOLDEN COMPASS, citing the enormous technical and financial challenges of the epic. The film would need more than $200M to produce and the services of several special effects houses around the world in order to bring Pullman's novel to the silver screen. New Line Cinema's initial budget was $150M and will use only one FX Company for the entire film.

When New Line Cinema was able to raise an additional $60M from foreign distributors and added 3 special effects houses to do the impossible, Weitz returned to the director's chair.

THE GOLDEN COMPASS opens in theaters on December 5.



IS THE FILM ANTI-RELIGION?

"Not anti-religion but anti-oppression and anti-authoritarian. It's opposed to the use of theocracy for political gain".

~ Award-winning author **Philip Pullman** ("The Golden Compass") from the talk at the Oxford Literary Festival in 2007

"Pullman's portrayal of the "Church" in his book amounts to an attack on dogmatism and the use of religion to oppress, not on CHRISTIANITY itself. I proposed that THE GOLDEN COMPASS be taught as part of religious education in schools."

~ His Eminence the **Archbishop of Canterbury Dr. Rowan Williams**

"The Golden Compass is not an atheistic work but a highly spiritual and reverent piece of writing. Those who attack it as an assault upon religion are mistaken."

~ The Golden Compass director **Chris Weitz** interviewed by British SFX magazine

"The basic essence of the film believes in faith and all the original Christian ideas of love and charity. It's a film against oppression. And there's nothing wrong with that. I don't want the movie apologizing."

~ **Daniel Craig** interviewed at 2007 Cannes Film Festival

"I was raised Catholic, the Catholic Church is part of my essence. I wouldn't be able to do this film if I thought it were at all anti-Catholic."

~ **Nicole Kidman** from Entertainment Weekly interview

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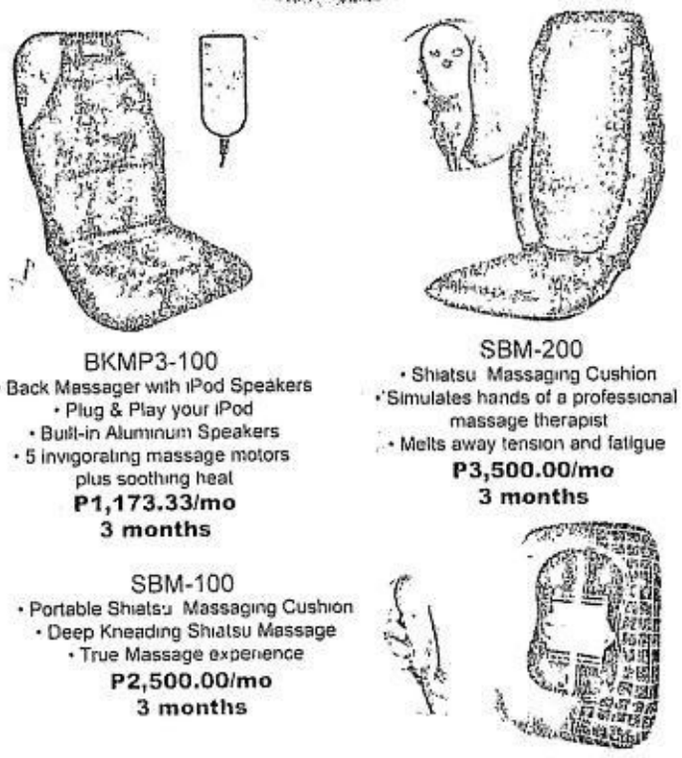

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2 THE KINGDOM MTRCB R-13 12.00 2.30, 5.00, 7.30, 10:00
3 HITMAN MTRCB R-13 12:30, 2:45, 5:00, 7:15, 9:30
4 MR. MAGORIUM MTRCB GP 1.00, 3.15 5:30, 7:45, 10:00

PREMIERE THEATRE FRED CLAUS / BEOWULF MTRCB. GP / PG-13 12.00, 2.30, 5.00 / 7.30, 10.00

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CINEMA 5 THE KINGDOM 11:45, 2:30, 5:10 7:50, 10:30 R-13

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Nov. 30	"Into the Woods" musical	8.00 PM
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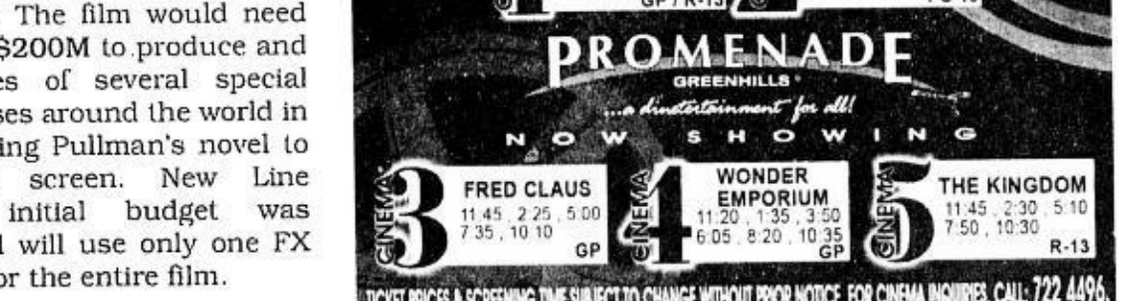

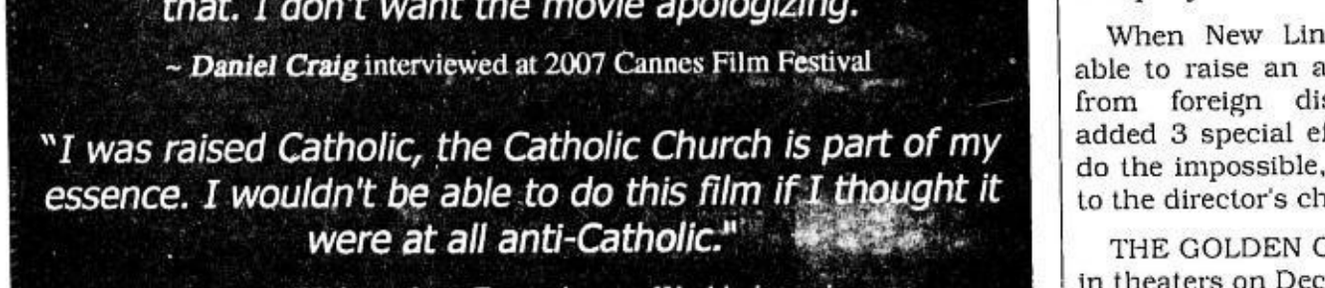

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EASTERN PROMISES

FROM ACCLAIMED DIRECTOR DAVID CRONENBERG

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FOCUS FEATURES

IN THEATERS DEC. 5

William Holden's Fil-Am wife chose love over career

MARSHALL AND HOLDEN. After their marriage, she appeared only occasionally in forgettable films.

By Behn Cervantes

LONG BEFORE BARBARA PEREZ costarred with Jeffrey Hunter in "No Man Is An Island," a Hollywood film shot in the Philippines, a Filipina had already made it in Hollywood: Brenda Marshall, a statuesque actress considered a classic beauty by Hollywood's beauty experts, was born Ardis Anderson in Negros in 1915. It is said that her mother was Filipina, although her official biography doesn't admit it.

She starred opposite the iconic Errol Flynn in "The Sea Hawk" (1940), then she played important roles in "Footsteps in the Dark," "Paris after Dark" and "The Constant Nymph." She seemed destined for Hollywood success.

Stardom

However, in 1941, she married newcomer William Holden, who had achieved stardom when he starred opposite drama queen, Barbara Stanwyck, in Clifford Odet's "The Golden Boy." Upon her marriage to Holden, Ardis—as she preferred to be called—practically "retired," and appeared only occasionally in forgettable films.

Holden, on the other hand, went on to become a major movie star: He bagged six Best Actor Oscar nominations (and he won for his performance in "Stalag 17"), and was one of the top box-office attractions of the '50s. He would make over 70 films in his lifetime, including Billy Wilder's "Sunset Boulevard" and "Sabrina." He invested heavily in resort hotels in Africa and became very wealthy. Holden and Marshall divorced in 1971.

Holden was one of Hollywood's great off-screen lovers. He reportedly maintained simultaneous romances with Grace Kelly and Audrey Hepburn. In the late '50s, he also figured in a lengthy intercontinental affair with French actress, Capucine. Years later, Hepburn confessed her love for the handsome actor, but she never considered marrying him because of his alcoholism. He was a ladies' man, indeed!

Box-office triumphs

While Ardis disappeared from the Hollywood scene, Holden continued to appear in box-office triumphs like "Love Is a Many Splendored Thing" (with Jennifer Jones), "The World of Suzie Wong" (with Nancy Kwan), "Picnic" and "Born Yesterday."

In the '60s, Holden starred in films like "The Wild Bunch" and "The Towering Inferno," but by then, alcohol abuse had already taken its toll on his good looks and Adonis-like physique.

On Nov. 12, 1981, while heavily intoxicated, he stepped on a rug and slipped, suffered a severe gash on his head, and bled to death. Ardis succumbed to lung cancer on July 30, 1992.

AT THE CINEMAS

TFX

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GLORIETTA 4	1 ENCHANTED	2 HITMAN	3 TRX THE KINGDOM GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 THE NAMESAKE	5 FRED CLAUS	6 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM	7 ONE MORE CHANCE
GREENBELT 1	1 PASUKOB		2 THE KINGDOM	
GREENBELT 3	1 TRX MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM GUARANTEED SEATS		2 TRX THE KINGDOM GUARANTEED SEATS	
	3 THE NAMESAKE GUARANTEED SEATS	4 FRED CLAUS GUARANTEED SEATS	5 ENCHANTED GUARANTEED SEATS	
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 TRX THE KINGDOM		2 FRED CLAUS	
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MARKET! MARKET!	1 PASUKOB		2 FRED CLAUS	
	3 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM	4 THE KINGDOM	5 ONE MORE CHANCE	
TRINOMA	1 PASUKOB	2 ONE MORE CHANCE	3 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM GUARANTEED SEATS	4 FRED CLAUS GUARANTEED SEATS
	5 HITMAN	6 ENCHANTED	7 TRX THE KINGDOM GUARANTEED SEATS	

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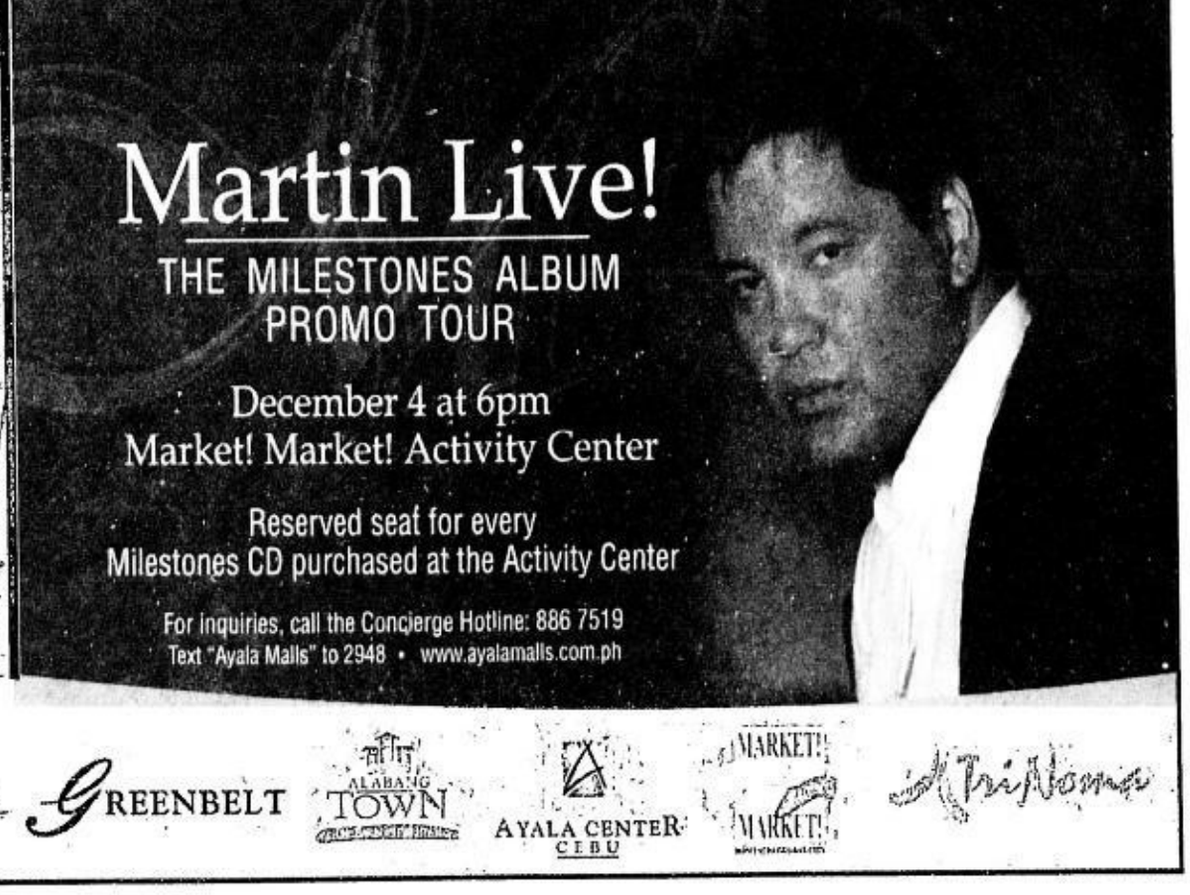
Rhythm Academy: Sam Concepcion with the Augustinian Larks
December 9; 6pm; Activity Center



glorietta GREENBELT ALABANG TOWN CENTER AYALA CENTER CEBU MARKET! MARKET! TriNoma

SATURDAY Special

DIAMOND AND KENNEDY-SCHLOSSBERG. Her picture was his inspiration.

Origins of hit songs revealed

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ruben V. Nepales

LOS ANGELES—YOU MUST have read the recent stories about Neil Diamond finally disclosing after many decades that the inspiration for one of his biggest hit songs, "Sweet Caroline," was really a photo of a very young Caroline Kennedy-Schlossberg.

Innocent

The Associated Press quoted the singer-songwriter as saying: "My inspiration for the song was the picture of a little girl dressed to the nines in her riding gear, next to her pony. It was such a wonderfully innocent picture—I immediately felt there was a song in there!"

President Kennedy's daughter was only a little girl when Diamond was still a "young songwriter, who was broke." It took the singer a long time to get the chance to personally tell Caroline how she had inspired him to compose "the most important song" of his career. The moment finally came when Neil sang the song to Caroline via satellite—on her 50th birthday!

News stories

Recent news stories also came out to reveal the stories behind other popular songs: Don McLean ("American Pie") was floored to learn that "Killing Me Softly With His Song" was about him.

Bloomberg News' Patrick Cole reported that the hauntingly beautiful song, penned by Charles Fox and Norman Gimbel, was sparked by a poem that inspired Lori Lieberman to compose after watching McLean in a concert—although it was Roberta Flack's version of Lieberman's song that became a huge hit.

Don also had interesting sources of inspiration for his trademark songs: For some listeners, the lyrics of "American Pie" don't make sense, but do you know that the song is a tribute to the late Buddy Holly, one of the pioneers of rock 'n' roll?

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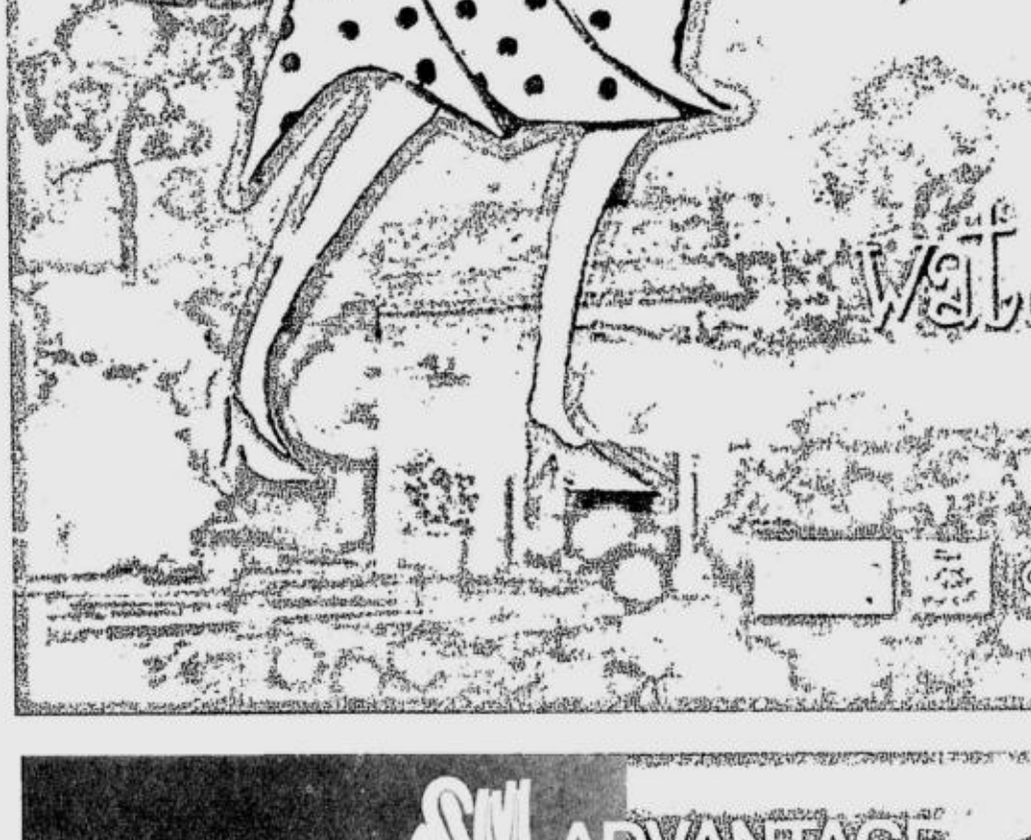

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GALLERIA

1 HITMAN • THX
1:40 3:40 5:40 7:40 9:40

6 ENCHANTED
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

2 MR. MAGORIUM's WONDER EMPORIUM
1:15 3:25 5:35 7:45 10:00

7 GAME PLAN
1:05 3:15 5:25 7:35 9:45

3 FRED CLAUS
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

8 ANIMAHENASYON: ANIMATION FESTIVAL
1:00 2:30 4:00 5:30 7:00

4 PASUKOB
1:15 3:25 5:35 7:45 10:00

9 ONE MORE CHANCE
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

5 THE KINGDOM
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

10 BEOWULF
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

ERMITA

1 PASUKOB
11:10 1:20 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00

6 ONE MORE CHANCE
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00

2 indieSine: STILL LIFE
2:00 4:00 6:00

7 BEOWULF
Midtown 12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

3 BOOGEYMAN 2
12:50 2:40 4:30 6:20 8:10 10:00

1 FRED CLAUS
2:35 5:05 7:35 10:00

4 HITMAN
12:25 2:20 4:15 6:10 8:05 10:00

2 THE KINGDOM
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

5 ENCHANTED
11:35 1:40 3:45 5:50 7:55 10:00

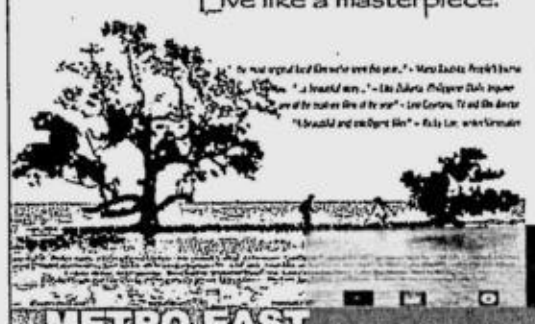
3 MR. MAGORIUM's WONDER EMPORIUM
12:25 2:20 4:15 6:10 8:05 10:00

Glaiza de Castro introducing Ron Capinding

a film by Katski Flores

Still Life

Live like a masterpiece.



STILL LIFE is the story of James Masino, a gifted Filipino painter who finds out he is afflicted with a paralyzing disease known as Guillain Barre Syndrome. Faced with a future where he can no longer paint, James leaves his life in the city and goes on a self-imposed exile to paint one last time, one final masterpiece. Unable to imagine a life without his art, he plans to kill himself once he finishes this painting. But Fate intervenes and derails this grand scheme when James learns that he must share this exile with Emma, a beautiful and mysterious young girl who at 19 has lived a life much too old for her years. But it is her courageous and unfailing optimism despite what life has dealt her that ultimately inspires James to realize a life beyond his canvass. Her search for meaning propels his journey towards hope and redemption.

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5 BEOWULF
1:05 3:35 6:20 9:00

2 PASUKOB
12:30 2:40 4:50 7:00 9:10

6 THE KINGDOM
12:05 2:15 4:25 6:35 9:00

3 ONE MORE CHANCE
10:45 1:20 3:55 6:30 9:05

7 HITMAN
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4 FRED CLAUS
11:20 1:40 4:00 6:20 9:00

8 ENCHANTED
12:40 2:45 4:50 6:55 9:00

NOVALICHES

1 THE KINGDOM
2 PASUKOB
3 ENCHANTED
4 ONE MORE CHANCE
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2 APAT DAPAT DAPAT APAT
3 RENDITION

STARMILLS

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5 ENCHANTED
6 beowulf

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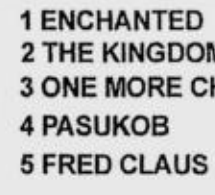
3 PASUKOB
4 LIONS FOR LAMB
5 ENCHANTED
6 BEOWULF



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MOVIE GUIDE

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5

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3 PASUKOB
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3 PASUKOB

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2 BOOGEY MAN

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1 BOOGEY MAN - 2
2 LIPSTIK
3 SEX SCANDAL
4 THE SEEKER: DARK IS RISING

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3 ENCHANTED
4 HIGHLANDER
5 PASUKOB

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2 PASUKOB
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4 ONE MORE CHANCE

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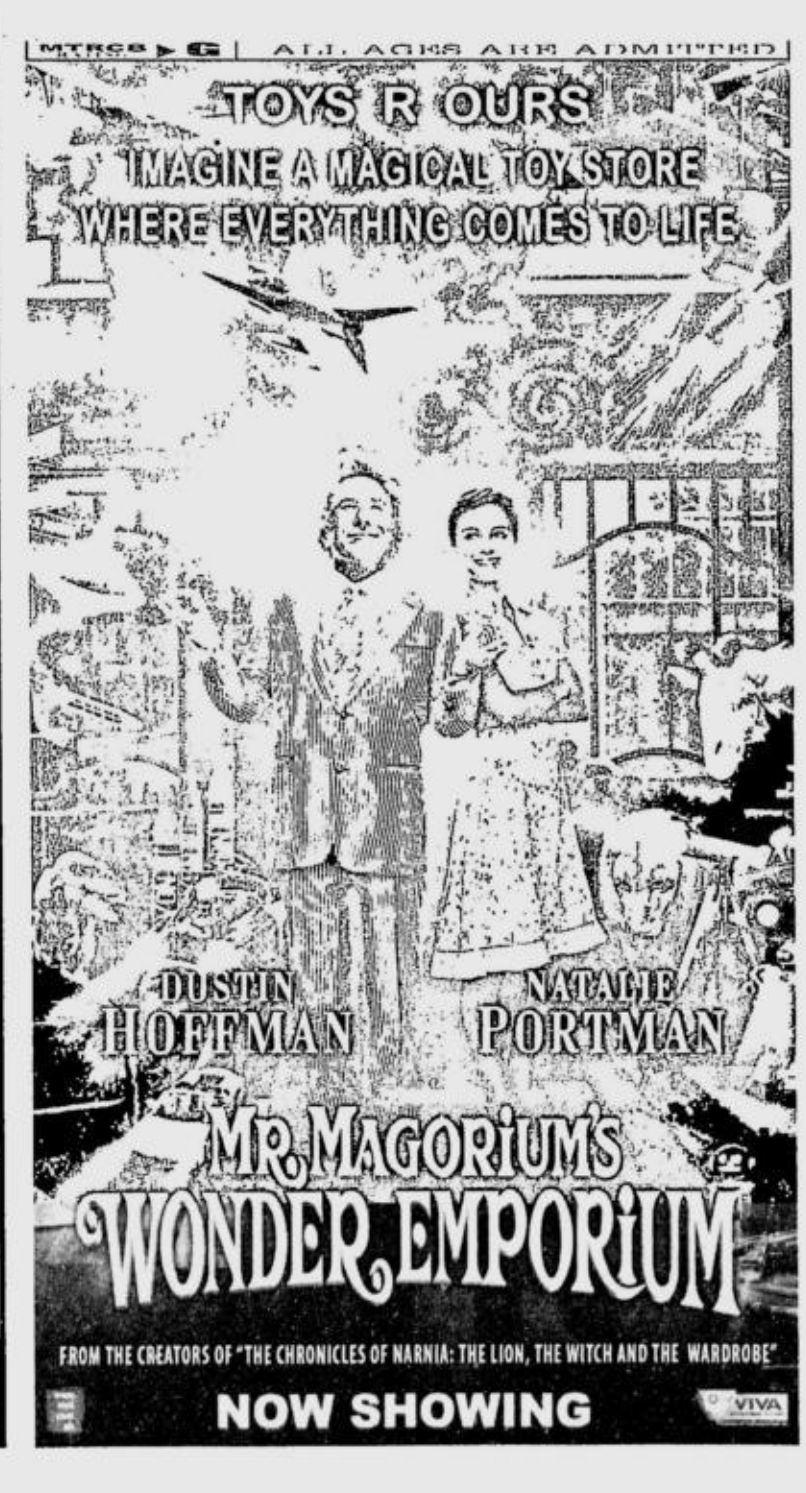


Origins of hit songs revealed

From page L1

Cole further revealed: "'American Pie' is about the glorious 1950s and the dark 1960s. It talks about Feb. 3, 1959—'the day the music died'—when a plane crash claimed the lives of Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens and J.P. 'The Big Bopper' Richardson!"

Artifacts

Many people know that Don's other popular song, "Vincent," is the singer's paean to painter, Vincent Van Gogh. Cole disclosed that the song is still played regularly at the Van Gogh Museum in the Netherlands—and its "sheet music has been buried with some of the painter's artifacts."

When we came to LA in the mid-1980s and saw MacArthur Park for the first time, we couldn't believe that the rundown place—then overrun by drug addicts and people selling fake green cards—was the very park that inspired Jimmy Webb to compose the timeless pop ditty made popular by the late actor, Richard Harris.

In better condition

The park was in better condition in the '60s. Webb told the LA Times' Geoff Boucher: "In mid-1965, I was besotted with my girlfriend—who worked across the street in an insurance company—at the time. MacArthur Park was where we met for lunch, fed the ducks and rode paddleboats."

Jimmy, whose song's lyrics talked about a cake being left out in the rain and that, "he'll never have that recipe again" (all together now, "Oh, no!"), explained: "Those lyrics were very real to me—there was nothing psychedelic about them! I really saw cakes at birthday parties held at the park. But, people reacted strongly to the song and its lyrics—there's been a lot of intellectual venom!"

Aspirations

Jimmy shared that he originally wrote "MacArthur Park" for the 1960s band, the Association (which turned it down)—he even had pop-symphony aspirations for the song!

However, the composer was surprised that Richard Harris—who's known to the younger generation as the original Professor Dumbledore in the "Harry Potter" film franchise—took a liking to the song.

The actor's instinct was right, and "MacArthur Park" became the carrier single of the actor-singer's pop debut album! Other singers like Frank Sinatra and Donna Summer have since recorded their own versions.

Jimmy once described the tune as "a hump on my back. I wish I had spent more time working on the song. But, who knew it was going to be this crazy hit song? I'm very glad it wasn't my last song!" But, who's complaining? To this day, "MacArthur Park" remains as popular as ever!

Incident

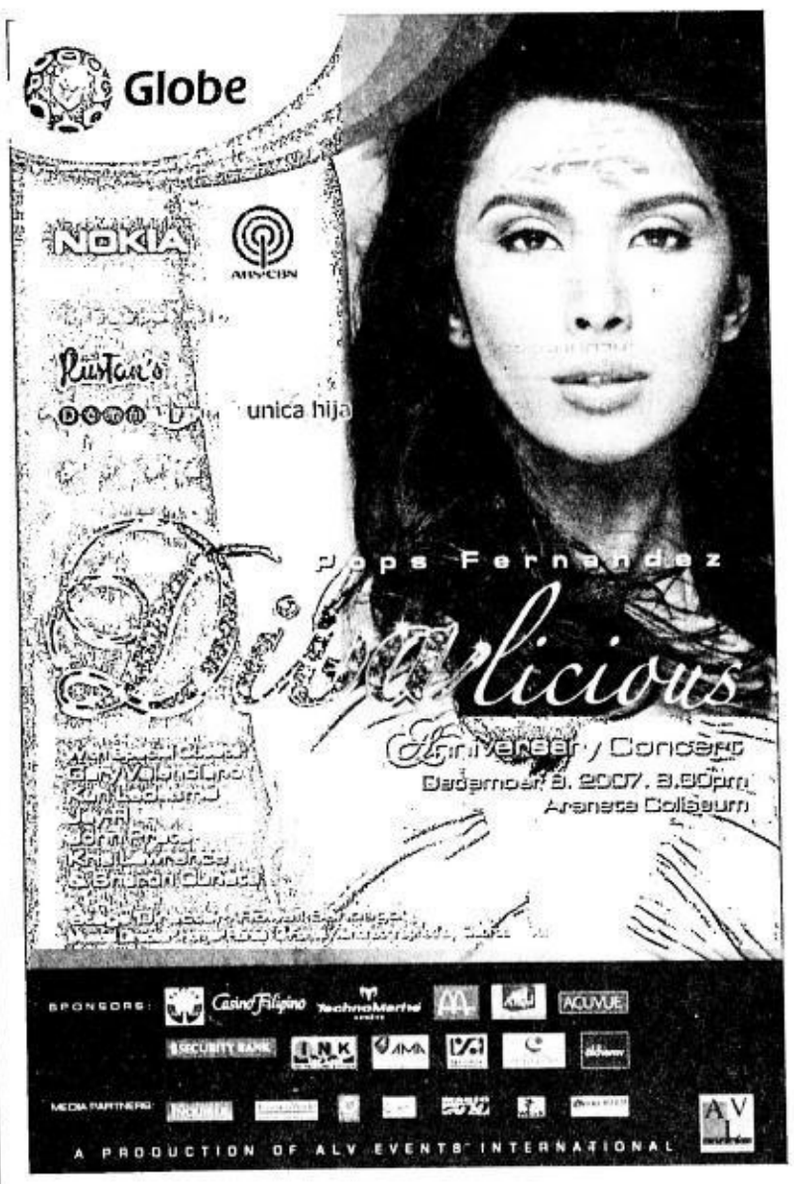
Interestingly, when Webb broke up with the girl he dated in Macarthur Park, the incident inspired him to write another song: "By the Time I Get to Phoenix."

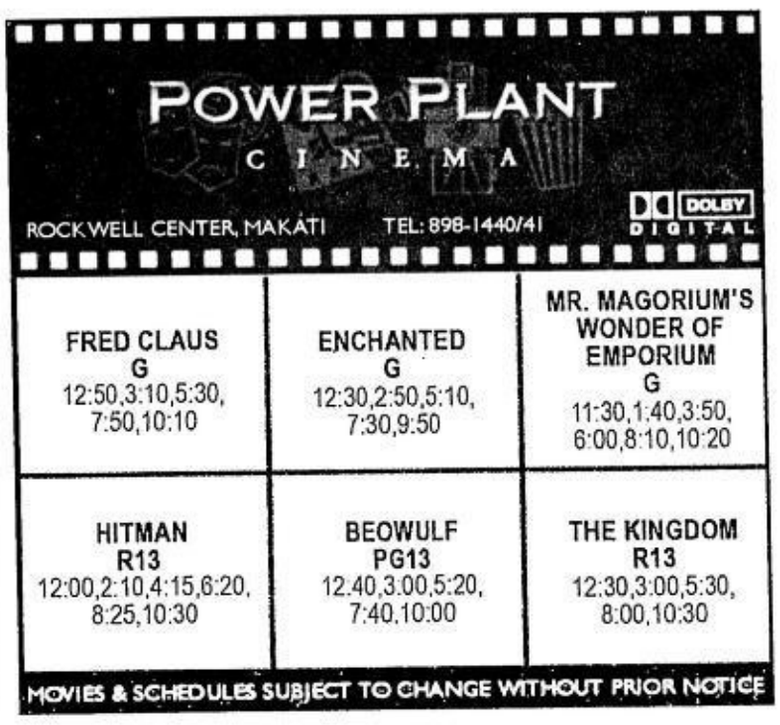
We're happy to report that, after decades of neglect, the park has been renovated recently. Now, kids are celebrating their birthdays there again—but this time around, let's hope that no one leaves a cake out in the rain, lest we burst out into song again: "Oh, no!"

* * *

ORIGINS/ L4

MENZEL. Starred in the stage versions of "Rent" and "Wicked."





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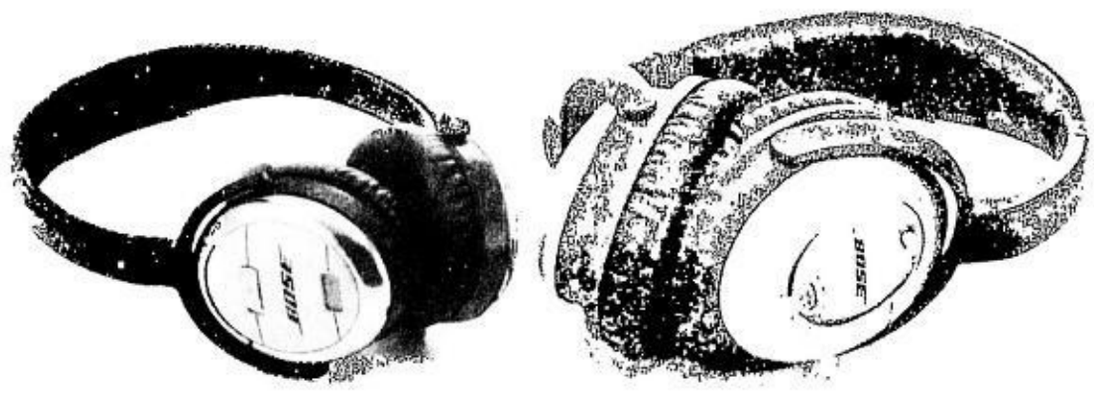

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NOW SHOWING

Hoffman, Portman impart wisdom in unconventional children's tale

HOFFMAN and Portman are dazzled by the magical treats in their 114-year-old toy store.

By Rito P. Asilo

"Mr. Magorium's Wonder Emporium"

D: Zack Helm

S: Dustin Hoffman, Natalie Portman and Jason Bateman

ZACK HELM'S DIRECTORIAL DEBUT IS not one for cynics. For viewers not familiar with the works of Marc Forster ("Finding Neverland"), Spike Jonze and Charlie Kaufman ("Being John Malkovich"), this "strange" movie may not amount to much.

But, if there are vestiges of their childhood's untainted faith and wide-eyed optimism left in their souls, then it's not hard to get drawn to the magical world of 243-year-old Edward Magorium (played by Dustin Hoffman), proprietor of the 114-year-old magic toy store, Mr. Magorium's Wonder Emporium.

When the eternally smiling toy impresario announces his "departure," Molly Mahoney (Natalie Portman), the 23-year-old loyal apprentice to whom Mr. Magorium bequeaths the store's ownership, doesn't take the news lightly.

Molly is a former child musical prodigy who has yet to fulfill her full artistic potential. Problem is, she's lost her spark! In fact, she's convinced that if she can't evoke magic in the Rachmaninoff scores that she used to play so brilliantly as a child, there's no way she can efficiently run Mr. Magorium's place by herself—especially now that, as accountant Henry Weston (Jason Bateman) confirms, the toy shop is on the verge of financial ruin!

As Molly struggles to find her long-lost "sparkle," she teams up with Henry and the toy store's eccentric 9-year-old patron, Eric (Zack Mills), to help get the store back on its feet—before it's too late!

Considering the film's infectiously whimsical tone, technical polish and the spellbinding visual tricks director Helm conjures up on the big screen, the production may seem too plot-pinched and tenuous to sustain an adult viewer's interest. For much younger audiences, however, watching the film can be a riveting experience—a potent ode to a child's trusting optimism, sense of adventure and magical wanderlust.

On paper, a more showy performer like Jim Carrey or Robin Williams could probably give the titular character the relentless verve and otherworldly spunk he requires, but Hoffman's weirdly low-key but winking characterization strangely suffices—a testament to the veteran actor's thespic wisdom.

On the other hand, Portman, who's as beautifully youthful as ever, takes her role too seriously, making her character less empathetic than she should be. Fortunately, Mills' participation brings up the film's energy level and he lends his precocious charm and refreshing presence to the occasionally disjointed narrative proceedings.

Helm, who wrote Will Ferrell's recent starrer, the cerebral metaphysical comedy, "Stranger Than Fiction," crafts a well-meaning film that dares to defy the cinematic medium's conventional storytelling norms—and, happily, it succeeds in spurts.

The movie generates more low-voltage buzz than heady, wacky thrills. But, it doesn't fail to remind viewers that, oftentimes, life is what we make it. As Mr. Magorium tells Molly: "Your life is an occasion—rise to it! It just requires a dash of magic!"

Origins of hit songs revealed

From page L3

Amy Adams coaxes Idina Menzel to sing 'Defying Gravity'

ADAMS. Plays a princess in "Enchanted."

IN OUR RECENT interview with Amy Adams, the actress revealed one of the perks she got from acting in the Disney movie, "Enchanted": She successfully convinced Broadway star, Idina Menzel, to sing the popular show tune, "Defying Gravity" (from the phenomenal stage musical, "Wicked")—just for her.

Menzel, who won a Tony for her performance as Elphaba in Stephen Schwartz's "Wicked," costars with Adams in "Enchanted" as the girlfriend of Patrick Dempsey's character. Amy recounted: "I stalked Idina to get her to sing 'Defying Gravity' for me and I succeeded (laughing)! Much to Idina's chagrin, I'm addicted to 'Wicked'!"

Composer

The Oscar-nominated actress also admitted that, lately, she's been "bursting into the songs from 'Wicked.'" Schwartz, the stage musical's composer, collaborated with Alan Menken to write songs for her latest movie.

Note to fans of "Wicked," the composer told us in a separate interview that the stage musical's much-anticipated film version will probably be realized in six years.

E-mail rvnepales_5585@yahoo.com, and read his blog, "The Nepales Report," on www.inquirerbloggers.net/nepalesreport.

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PHILIPPINE Sunday INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Stories after storm: Blessings among the ruins

By Jaymee T. Gamil,
Inquirer Southern Luzon

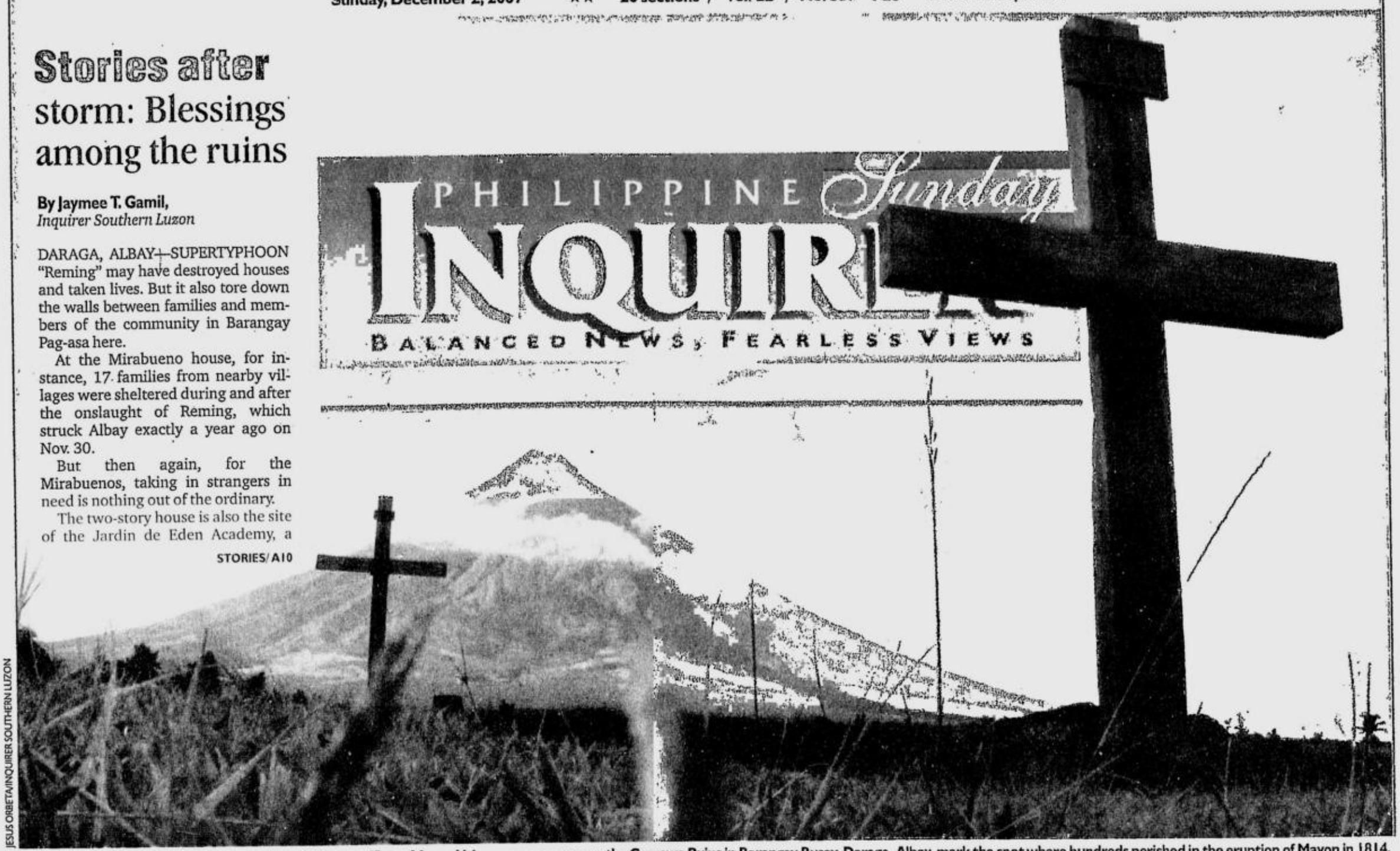
DARAGA, ALBAY—SUPERTYPHOON "Reming" may have destroyed houses and taken lives. But it also tore down the walls between families and members of the community in Barangay Pag-asa here.

At the Mirabueno house, for instance, 17 families from nearby villages were sheltered during and after the onslaught of Reming, which struck Albay exactly a year ago on Nov. 30.

But then again, for the Mirabuenos, taking in strangers in need is nothing out of the ordinary.

The two-story house is also the site of the Jardin de Eden Academy, a

STORIES/ A10



JESUS ORBETA/INQUIRER SOUTHERN LUZON

AMONG THE RUINS: Against the backdrop of the magnificent Mayon Volcano, crosses among the Cagsawa Ruins in Barangay Busay, Daraga, Albay, mark the spot where hundreds perished in the eruption of Mayon in 1814. Today, the same crosses memorialize those felled by Supertyphoon "Reming" exactly a year ago last Friday. Curiously, Reming leveled houses and recreation areas but kept intact the ruins of the church flattened by the quake.

GMA offers ₱1M reward

Bounty for the capture of Marine Capt. Faeldon

By Alcuin Papa and Cynthia D. Balana

ANYONE WITH INFORMATION LEADING TO THE CAPture of a renegade Marine officer involved in the Nov. 29 takeover of portions of the Peninsula Manila hotel in Makati City can expect to become a millionaire.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has offered a P1-million reward for the capture of Capt. Nicanor Faeldon, Philippine National Police Director General Avelino Razon said yesterday in a phone interview.

Razon had earlier described Faeldon as "armed and dangerous."

In her departure statement before she left on a seven-day trip to Europe last night, the President said: "I hereby direct all our government departments and agencies, especially our security and defense forces, to remain vigilant and flush out any remaining threats to national security and public safety in the country, while at the same time restoring among our people a state of normalcy and calm.

"While I am physically away, I am confident that the Vice President, ably assisted by the Cabinet secretaries, shall, as in the past, zealously look after the national interest," she added.

Razon said, "We expect that the reward offer will encourage people in the community to provide us [the necessary] information."

He said tracker teams from the PNP's Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) and Intelligence Group had been dispatched to hunt down Faeldon, as well as three other Magdalo soldiers involved in the failed revolt led by Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV

GMA OFFERS/ A8

NEW NAMES etched on the granite Wall of Remembrance. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

4 freedom fighters join heroes' roster

By Ma. Ceres P. Doyo
and Jeannette I. Andrade

A MUCH-AWARDED FILM DIRECTOR, a fearless Chinese-Filipino publisher, a nationalist scientist and an academic-turned-revolutionary were honored yesterday at the Bantayog ng mga Bayani (Monument for Heroes).

A small crowd gathered at the monument at dusk, placing lighted candles before the new names on the Wall of Remembrance reserved for martyrs and heroes who fought for freedom during the dictatorship and offered their lives for love of country.

The names of Catalino "Lino" Brocka, Rizal Chang Keng Yuyitung, Aloysius "Ochie" Baes and Nicolas Moralizon Solana Jr. were etched on the granite wall that already contains the names of more than 100 outstanding patriots.

A soaring bronze Castrillo monument of a mother raising a fallen son is the centerpiece of the three-hectare memorial at the corner of Edsa and

4 FREEDOM/ A10

What did Bonifacio look like? Question stalls statue

MARLON RAMOS/SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU

THE CENTERPIECE of a 3-hectare, P27.9M Bonifacio shrine and eco-park in Maragondon, Cavite, is unfinished as debate rages on the true likeness of the Katipunan founder.

By Marlon Ramos
Inquirer Southern Luzon

MARAGONDON, CAVITE—HOW DID Andres Bonifacio, the father of the Philippine revolution, really look like?

The answer to this question has stalled a government project meant to honor the hero whose exploits led to the declaration of Philippine independence from Spain in 1898.

For over two years now, the local government of this town and a respected artist have been at odds regarding the features on a 12-foot statue of Bonifacio.

Mayor Monte Andaman, together with other officials and residents of this town, have questioned how sculptor Abdulmari "Toym" Imao Jr. depicted the "Great Plebeian" in his work which serves as the central piece of the

WHAT DID/ A17

After the Pen siege, GMA goes shopping

By Christine O. Avendaño

AFTER A SHORT-LIVED SIEGE, what's the best way to show everyone that the country is back to normal?

Go shopping.

President Macapagal-Arroyo did just that. With her security detail in tow, she went shopping yesterday at a flea market in Manila. *(See photo on Page A2.)*

Playing the dual roles of President and housewife, Ms Arroyo bought household items that included plastic plates, bathroom brushes and trash cans.

AFTER/ A17

Montemaria mega shrine not yet up but healing stones abound

By Bernardo V. Lopez
Contributor

IT WAS IN AUGUST THAT FR. NAP Baltazar of the St. Francis of Assisi parish in Meycauayan, Bulacan, first heard about the phenomenal gift of healing of Fr. Fernando Suarez, from a Mass the latter celebrated on television.

Baltazar recalled experiencing a strange, compelling sense to find out more about Suarez. He searched the Internet and found out that the Canada-based Suarez was planning to build in five years a mega-shrine dedicated to Our Lady of the Poor in Montemaria (Mary's Mountain) in Batangas.

There were a dozen or so YouTube videos of Suarez, including one where he recited a healing prayer in Montemaria *(see Youtube URL http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8UP3LHBgtIc)*. It is part of a "Cyber Healing Center" being posted on the Internet, intended for those who need healing but cannot travel.

Baltazar spent sleepless nights mulling over his discoveries. Something was pushing him to go to Montemaria.

And so, on Aug. 30, accompanied by four parishioners and armed with a crude map, he embarked on a trip, a pilgrimage, to Montemaria.

There, amid a strong wind, Baltazar went to the very edge of the cliff and contemplated the mesmerizing panorama of Verde Island and the passing ships looking like tiny toys below.

The hilltop was bare except for a white wooden stage where Suarez said Mass back in 2006, when it was erected.

MONTEMARIA/ A10

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LIFESTYLE /E1
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SUNDAY MAGAZINE
Bellissimo with a personal touch of (Cesar) Montano with Aglia Olio Pasta pizza

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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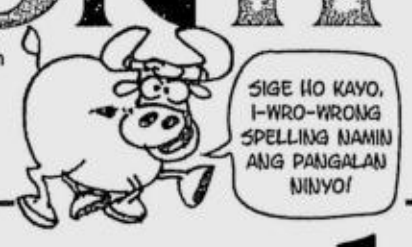

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The eastern section of the country and Northern Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers.

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Mostly Cloudy	Cebu	Mostly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Mostly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Mostly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Mostly Cloudy
Legazpi	Mostly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Mostly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Mostly Cloudy

COMPILED BY: SCHATZI QUODALA, PDI RESEARCH/12/01/07 SOURCE: PAGASA

EZ2
26 4 | 3 2 3 3 5 3

SIX DIGIT (In exact order)
Mid-Day SUERTRES Evening
5 0 4 | 0 5 8

6/42 LUZON/VIS-MIN
14 22 23 26 31 41
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GMA rues assault on media

Police procedures at Pen became a problem, President admits

By Christine O. Avendaño

BESEIGED BY PROTESTS OVER THE ARREST AND handcuffing of journalists covering the Peninsula Manila hotel siege on Thursday, President Macapagal-Arroyo has assured the media that her administration was not out to stop it from doing its job.

The President expressed "regret that police procedures became a problem for media, even for a few hours."

"I am a fervent believer in press freedom and the rule of law.," President Arroyo said in a nationwide address Friday night, her second since the failed revolt led by Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV and renegade military officers.

She said that on the same night, she had ordered the police to "expedite the processing and release of media as soon as possible."

In the aftermath of the standoff, the police arrested 30 reporters and cameramen, herded them to their headquarters at Camp Bagong Diwa in Bicutan, Taguig City, where they were "processed" and then released.

Law prevailed

In her second address, President Arroyo said the rule of law had prevailed and vowed to punish Trillanes, Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim and their group "to the full extent of the law."

She had scathing words to describe the group in her statement, referring to them as "a few desperate men," "misguided," "desperados" and "lone wolves."

"Since when is promoting violence, undermining the Constitution and destruction of property an act of patriotism? Since when do Filipinos embrace anarchy, promote chaos and advance instability? Never is the answer, which is why these lone wolves have misunderstood the wisdom and faith of the Philippine people," she said.

During her meeting with the Cabinet national security cluster early Friday, the President had asked the officials to be "very circumspect when it comes to the media" and reminded them that the government was "not at war with them," according to Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez.

Media groups have roundly condemned what they said were the illegal arrests of journalists who covered the Makati standoff, saying that such actions by the government posed a serious threat to press freedom and the public's right to know.

Lapses in judgment

In Cebu City, the President got some sympathy from broadcast industry leaders who said the big TV networks in Manila may have committed some "lapses in judgment" when they allowed their crews to remain inside the seized hotel.

Edward Abad, president of the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas (KBP) Cebu chapter, condemned the arrest and handcuffing of journalists who covered the Makati siege, but at the same time said there could have been a lapse in judgment, especially by the major TV networks, when they allowed their crews to remain inside the hotel with the rebel soldiers.

"I think there were some lapses. It should be the judgment call of the big networks to think of the safety of their people," Abad said.

Scoop or lives

Abad said the incident should serve as a lesson for what is important: The scoop or the lives of the people, including the reporters themselves, who are inside the hotel.

"I would like to suggest to our KBP Manila directorate or the NPC (National Press Club) that they sit down with the government and draft guidelines that will set the limitations of the media. They can come with a MOA (memorandum of agreement) so we in the media can police our own ranks," Abad said.

Cebu City Councilor Jack Jakosalem, the former KBP president in Cebu, said that while he believed the journalists were "too eager" in their coverage of the Makati siege, he did not believe they violated any laws since there were no guidelines in the first place on how to cover "historic but threatening events." *With Jhunnex Napallacan, Inquirer Visayas*

ON THE DAY she was to leave for Europe and two days after the rebel siege at the Peninsula hotel, President Arroyo is stumped by the wide selection of ceramic bowls and flatware at the Paco flea market where she went to shop for supplies for Malacañang. *(See story on Front Page)*

PHOTO BY LYN RILLON

WHAT'S INSIDE

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9 PINOY UN peacekeepers hurt in accidents /A9

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Failed Transco bidder had its chance – Ibazeta

By Abigail L. Ho

THE POWER SECTOR ASSETS and Liabilities Management Corp (Psalm) would rather face the judgment of the courts and undergo an investigation than allow La Costa Development Corp. to place a bid for the 25-year National Transmission Corp. (Transco) concession on Dec. 12.

Mincing no words, Psalm president Jose Ibazeta said no concessions would be made for any entity that had already been disqualified from the bidding process.

This meant that even if La Costa were able to produce the requirements that it was unable to submit during the prequalification period, it still would not be allowed to bid for the Transco concession, he said.

"The prequalification period has long been over. The board has prequalified four bidders. What would bidders and the financial community say if we change the rules in midstream to accommodate one more bidder? To be sure, they will wonder if we're serious about our bidding procedures," Ibazeta said in a statement.

"This is our fourth attempt at privatizing Transco. I doubt if the investors will come back if this round does not push through," he added.

La Costa, a consortium headed by Salvador Zamora II, brother of opposition Rep. Ronaldo Zamora, and former Finance Secretary Roberto de Ocampo, has filed suit in the Makati Regional Trial Court, calling for an order to stop the Transco bid.

The group alleged that there was "foul play" in the privatization process after the Psalm board disqualified it from participating further in the bidding.

But Ibazeta said the Dec. 12 bid submission would push through, "unless Psalm receives an order from the court."

"At this point, it is all up to the courts. As I have said, my faith is strong in our judicial system and in Psalm's prequalification procedure," he said.

He said it would do the country a lot of good, if the auction were allowed to push through.

"I am hoping that the Transco bidding will push through for the benefit of the country. The bidders say they are here to make an investment. This small window of opportunity for investments to come into the energy sector will not be around forever. So it's really our loss if the Transco bidding fails again," Ibazeta said.

Santa Cop coming to town

By Alcuin Papa

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION POLICE OFFICE (NCRPO) chief Director Geary Barias announced yesterday that policemen clad in Santa Claus suits would be deployed to certain areas in Metro Manila to maintain the peace during the Christmas season.

"We want to make sure our people celebrate the Christmas season peacefully, free from crime incidents. Our targets will be petty criminals like pickpockets and 'holdup' men preying on holiday shoppers," Barias told the INQUIRER.

He said the top brass would concentrate on beefing up police numbers in five areas: Quiapo and Divisoria in Manila, Baclaran, Bagong Silang in Caloocan, Litex and Cubao in Quezon City.

Barias said his office would be deploying some 1,000 policemen in these areas, including those in Santa suits. This was also part of efforts to bring the PNP closer to the public, he added.

The authorities would also consider an increased police presence in other areas, depending on the assessment of the directors of the five police districts in Metro Manila.

"In cities and municipalities where there are major department stores, we will leave it up to our district directors to deploy their men after they have identified crime-prone areas," Barias said.

In the five target areas, Barias said, the police would set up assistance centers where victims of crimes could file a report. They would also enhance police visibility in the areas and enlist in the effort other "force multipliers" like barangay officials.

He added that 700 new police recruits would be fielded to different churches in Metro Manila to stand guard during the traditional "simbang gabi" (early morning Mass).

Gov't-MILF peace talks postponed

COTABATO CITY—THE GOVERNMENT HAS postponed the resumption of peace talks with the secessionist Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in Kuala Lumpur this week but no reason was given, a rebel leader said yesterday.

Mohagher Iqbal, MILF chief negotiator, said retired Gen. Rodolfo Garcia, head of the government peace panel, called him up and informed him of the government's decision.

The exploratory talks were to be held in Kuala Lumpur on Dec. 4-6.

"I was unofficially informed by my counterpart that the 15th GRP-MILF exploratory talks were temporarily suspended. We are not sure yet when the meeting will be scheduled," Iqbal said in a text message.

Asked the probable reason for the postponement, Iqbal said he could only surmise that it had something to do with the political turmoil in Manila.

Threat remains

Philippine National Police Director General Avelino Razon had said that although the Makati standoff had been quelled, the threat against the Arroyo administration remained.

Muhammad Ameen, head of the MILF secretariat, said the recent attempt to topple the administration should serve as a reminder to the MILF and the Bangsamoro people to remain united.

Meanwhile, leaders of the Archdiocese of Cotabato said they continued to pray for "true and lasting peace" in troubled Mindanao.

Cotabato Auxiliary Bishop Jose Colin Bagaforo, who led Friday's launch of Mindanao Week of Peace, said the projected peace agreement, which could be signed next year, would pave the way for the realization of this dream.

"The peace-signing would open better socioeconomic opportunities for the people of Mindanao. And this is what we want after years of suffering from the armed conflict that had displaced thousands of innocent inhabitants," Bagaforo said.

Not a guarantee of peace

But some peace advocates and a ranking military official in Mindanao said the projected pact between the government and the MILF would not automatically ensure peace unless other factors like poverty and corruption were also addressed.

"I doubt that peace will come if ever a GRP-MILF peace agreement is signed because another group might surface to sow trouble in Mindanao (again)," Brig. Gen. Antonio Amodia, deputy chief of the Army's 10th Infantry Division based here, told reporters during the Kapihan sa Dabaw, a breakfast forum held at SM Davao City the other day.

Amodia cited as an example the 1996 final agreement with the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), once the biggest rebel group in Mindanao. Despite the agreement, skirmishes regularly occur between soldiers and MNLF combatants in some parts of Mindanao, he said. *Edwin O. Fernandez, Judy Quiros and Charlie C. Señase, Inquirer Mindanao*

Cooking gas prices up anew

SAYING THE PRICE OF LIQUEFIED PETROleum gas (LPG) in the world market had surged to a record high this month, local oil firms yesterday increased their cooking gas prices by P1.68 per kilogram, inclusive of the 12-percent value-added tax (VAT).

Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. and Total (Philippines) Corp. raised the prices of their Shellane and TotalGaz LPG products at 6 a.m. yesterday. Petron Corp. hiked the price of its Gasul at noon the same day.

Total also hiked the price of its autoLPG, or LPG used as transport fuel, by P1.50 a liter.

With the increases, the price of 11-kg LPG cylinders now range between P548.20 and P602.12.

According to industry data, the international contract price of LPG rose to an all-time high of $872.50 per metric ton (MT), $125 higher than the November contract price of $747.50 per MT.

Petron said the contract price increase for this month should be equivalent to a P5.60-a-kg price hike for December, without the VAT. This means that consumers may still expect cooking gas prices to rise by more than P4 a kg within the month. *Abigail L. Ho*

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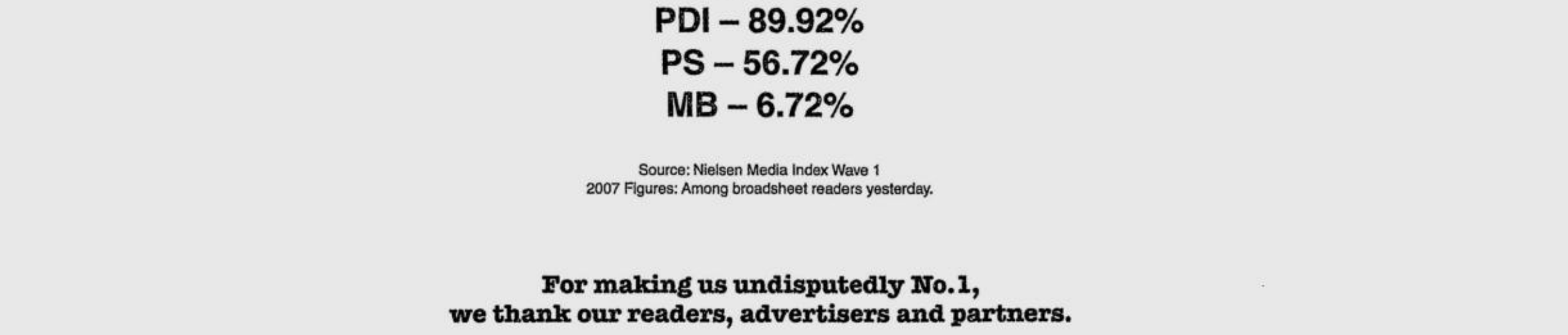

JDV would have gov't pay for political campaigns

By Norman Bordadora

SPEAKER JOSE DE Venecia will ask President Macapagal-Arroyo to certify as urgent a bill setting aside government funds to subsidize political parties and keep politicians from having to approach vested individuals and groups for financial support.

De Venecia said he would talk to the President in an interview last week after the International Conference of Asian Political Parties (ICAPP) endorsed his proposal for governments in the region to finance political parties.

The conference was attended by representatives of some of Asia's major political parties.

"This proposal will help put an end to indiscretion and fund-raising activities by political parties and their candidates that are always suspect because they border on corruption," De Venecia said.

Urgent bill

"Through this initiative, political parties may focus on their campaigns and platforms without influence from drug lords and gambling lords," he added.

Asked if he would then ask President Arroyo to certify the bill as urgent, De Venecia said: "Yes, I will."

"Asia's major political parties have endorsed unanimously an initiative that will help dramatically reduce corruption by political parties and their candidates," he said.

Among the political parties that attended the ICAPP meet were the United New Democratic Party of Korea, Cambodia's Funcinpec Party, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, Indian National Congress party, Iran Parties House, UMNO Youth of Malaysia, the Communist Party of Nepal and the Pakistan Muslim League.

De Venecia said the ICAPP standing committee which met in Tehran recently also endorsed two other ideas he had put forward—the Asian microfinance fund to create micro-entrepreneurs and reduce poverty, and a massive reforestation program meant to offset the effects of global warming.

State financing

He said state financing for political parties is being done in the United States, much of Europe and Japan.

De Venecia said ICAPP members admitted that almost every Asian country "has a problem on financing of political parties."

The Speaker's bill on state financing for political parties was approved by the House of Representatives in the prior 13th Congress but it failed to gain Senate approval.

It has a counterpart bill in the Senate that was filed by Sen. Edgardo Angara.

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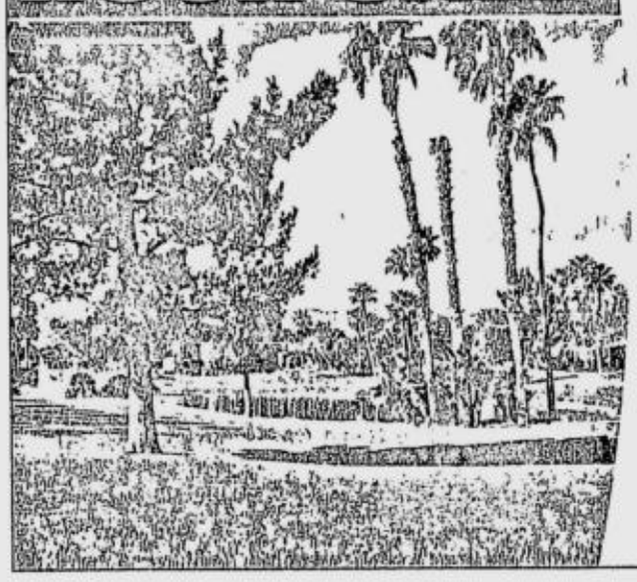

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Sunday, December 2, 2007
1st Sunday of Advent

1st Reading: Isaiah 2:1-5

Let us walk in the light of the Lord!

The vision of Isaiah, son of Amoz, concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

In the last days, the mountain of Yahweh's house shall be set over the highest mountains and shall tower over the hills.

All the nations shall stream to it, saying, "Come, let us go to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and we may walk in his paths. For the Teaching comes from Zion, and from Jerusalem the word of Yahweh.

"He will rule over the nations and settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not raise sword against nation; they will train for war no more.

"O nation of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord!"

2nd Reading: Romans 13:11-14

Our salvation is nearer.

You know what hour it is. This is the time to awake, for our salvation is now nearer than when we first believed; the night is almost over and day is at hand. Let us discard, therefore, everything that belongs to darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. As we live in the full light of day, let us behave with decency; no banquets with drunkenness, no promiscuity or licentiousness, no fighting or jealousy. Put on, rather, the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not be led by the will of the flesh nor follow its desires.

Gospel: Matthew 24:37-44

Stay awake, that you may be prepared!

Jesus said to his disciples, "At the coming of the Son of Man it will be just as it was in the time of Noah. In those days before the Flood, people were eating and drinking, and marrying, until the day when Noah went into the ark. Yet they did not know what would happen until the flood came and swept them away. So will it be at the coming of the Son of Man. Of two men in the field, one will be taken and the other left. Of two women grinding wheat together at the mill, one will be taken and the other left.

"Stay awake, then, for you do not know on what day your Lord will come. Just think about this: if the owner of the house knew that the thief would come by night around a certain hour, he would stay awake to prevent his house to be broken into. So be alert, for the Son of Man will come at the hour you least expect."

Commentary

Now we begin the year of the Lord 2008, with the prophecies of Isaiah whose visions are ones of justice, peace, light and freedom, hope for all the nations, and unity among all peoples. This is the intent, the will of God for all on earth. God wants all to know wisdom and hear the Word of God, and walk in the paths of truth and communion. And there is to be no war, no aggression, no conflicts between nations, and no preparation for killing. We are to be about the work of God: feeding the hungry, giving wisdom to all, and living in the peace and light of God. This is what God is about—is this what we are about?

If not, wake up! Stop all the evil that leads to war, to killing, hate and divisions! Stop doing deeds that are laced with evil. It is time to stand in the light—the Light of the World that is Jesus the Son of Man coming to call us all to justice, to the truth. It is time to be seen for who we are and what we have done, individually and with others, in this world, in our times. There is no more time for preparation—Our God, the Son of Man is coming—NOW! Today is the day of the Lord.

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FEMALE uniformed personnel restrain Elizabeth Principe as she shouts revolutionary slogans during her presentation to media on Saturday. Principe is a suspected official of the Communist Party of the Philippines. REM ZAMORA

Cops say suspected Red may have Magdalo ties

By Julie M. Aurelio

AUTHORITIES YESTERDAY announced the arrest of a ranking member of the Communist Party of the Philippines and said they were investigating possible links between the Magdalo group of renegade soldiers and the leftist rebels.

Lt. Gen. Alexander Yano, commanding general of the Philippine Army, said they arrested Elizabeth Principe, a suspected member of the CPP central committee on Wednesday, and believe her presence in Manila might have been related to Thursday's Peninsula hotel seige by rebel military officers, as well as Friday's protest rallies.

"We believe she was in Manila for an important mission," Yano said without elaborating.

Principe, 56, who is also chair of the rebels' peace panel, was arrested by combined elements of the Intelligence and Security Group and the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group at 12:30 p.m. on Wednesday along P. Tuazon Street near the vicinity of Ali Mall in Cubao, Quezon City.

Six arrest warrants had been issued against her by different courts in Isabela and Nueva Vizcaya. She did not resist arrest.

Principe is wanted for rebellion and kidnapping with double murder in Isabela, and three cases of robbery with murder and another case of robbery with arson in Nueva Vizcaya.

Yano said authorities were also investigating Tintin Antonio, a suspected CPP member operating in northern Luzon, who had alleged links to the Magdalo.

"The Magdalo had previous contact with the CPP. There are previous formal agreements between the Magdalo and the leftists, and this Tintin Antonio has been working with the Magdalo before," said Deputy Director Gen. Jesus Versoza, police deputy chief for administration.

Report: Many Pinoys lack sanitary facilities at home

By Margaux C. Ortiz

BEPPU CITY, JAPAN—MORE THAN 20 million Filipinos do not have their own sanitary toilets at home.

A study completed this year by the Water and Sanitation Program of the World Bank, said 9.1 million Filipinos still went to the toilet in the open—ranking third behind Indonesia and Cambodia, which had 22 million and 9.8 million people, respectively, who relieved themselves on the streets or in the fields.

At the same time, around 15.2 million Filipinos used public toilets, the study said.

According to Jamal Saghir, World Bank Energy, Transport and Water director, the Philippines ranked second to Indonesia which had 15.7 million people still using public latrines.

Billions lost

The study entitled "Economic Impacts of Sanitation in Southeast Asia," said the Philippines and its Asian neighbors Indonesia, Cambodia and Vietnam lost a whopping $9 billion every year because of poor sanitation and hygiene.

The results of the study were presented yesterday to the ministers and senior government officials who attended the first East Asia Ministerial Conference on Sanitation and Hygiene here.

"Since the year 2000, there has been a growing movement to make sure that sanitation is put at the forefront of issues," World Bank consultant and conference director Barbara Evans said in an interview.

"It is just timely to hold a conference on sanitation in East Asia, with 800 million in the region who still do not have access to basic sanitation," Evans said.

She said basic sanitation meant all types of sanitary household latrines or toilets.

Embarrassed

"There are other aspects of the sanitation issue such as sewerage systems and the management of septage. However, we chose to focus on this first step—which is to ensure that every household has a toilet of its own," Evans said.

She pointed out that the alarming lack of sanitation in the four countries included in the World Bank study had resulted in diseases and economic losses.

"A gram of adult excreta contains a million bacteria and a hundred million viruses resulting in killer diseases such as diarrhea," Evans said, adding that diarrhea was responsible for the annual deaths of 100,000 children under the age of five.

The World Bank study also showed that the Philippines, Cambodia, Indonesia and Vietnam released 13 million tons of feces into the environment every year, Evans said.

Almud Weitz, WSP East Asia and the Pacific (EAP) regional team leader, said that "because sanitation is still considered a dirty word in the political and social spheres of many East Asian countries, politicians and people in general tend to feel uncomfortable and embarrassed in talking about toilets, feces and defecation."

"The economic, health and environmental costs of poor sanitation are often not directly visible and are swept under the carpet," Weitz said, explaining that the nine East Asian countries that are not doing well in terms of sanitation lose a total of $40 billion per year.

Still no toilets for most

These nine East Asian countries—whose health ministers and officials attended the EASAN conference—included the Philippines, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Burma (Myanmar), Mongolia, Timor-Leste, China and Indonesia.

She added, "The economic toll is calculated based on the aggregated economic losses due to health-related costs, losses in productive time, costs due to water pollution and reduction in tourism."

Evans pointed out that despite the fact that the Philippines had 72 percent coverage in terms of access to basic sanitation, a significant part of the population still did not have toilets.

'Show smoking's effects on packs'

By Julie M. Aurelio

SINGAPORE—ACCORDING TO AN international expert on respiratory diseases, all cigarettes sold must have graphic images showing the side effects of smoking.

Dr. Antonio Anzueto, a professor at the University of Texas Health Center, cited the rising number of smokers in the Asia-Pacific.

Scary antismoking images could dissuade people from lighting up, said Anzueto during a press conference in Singapore.

Anzueto, along with other doctors, presented a study on chronic bronchitis and other smoking-related illnesses at a briefing sponsored by Bayer.

He said he was aware of proposals in the Philippines for a law that would require cigarette companies to include picture-based warnings on packages.

Philippine Health Undersecretary Alexander Padilla has been pushing for such a law.

New tack timely

Anzueto said graphic warnings, such as photographs of severely damaged lungs or a malnourished baby, would drive home the point against cigarette smoking.

"It has been done in Europe, Venezuela, Italy, Thailand and other countries. The number of sold packs went down by at least 25 percent in the first month alone," he said.

Anzueto said that in Europe, doctors are more conscious of smoking-related diseases and are more keen in identifying chronic bronchitis and other similar illnesses.

"Europeans are smoking less now because they are more aware of the effects of smoking," he said.

Anzueto added that the new tack against cigarette smoking was timely, especially with the upward trend in smoking among Asian men and women.

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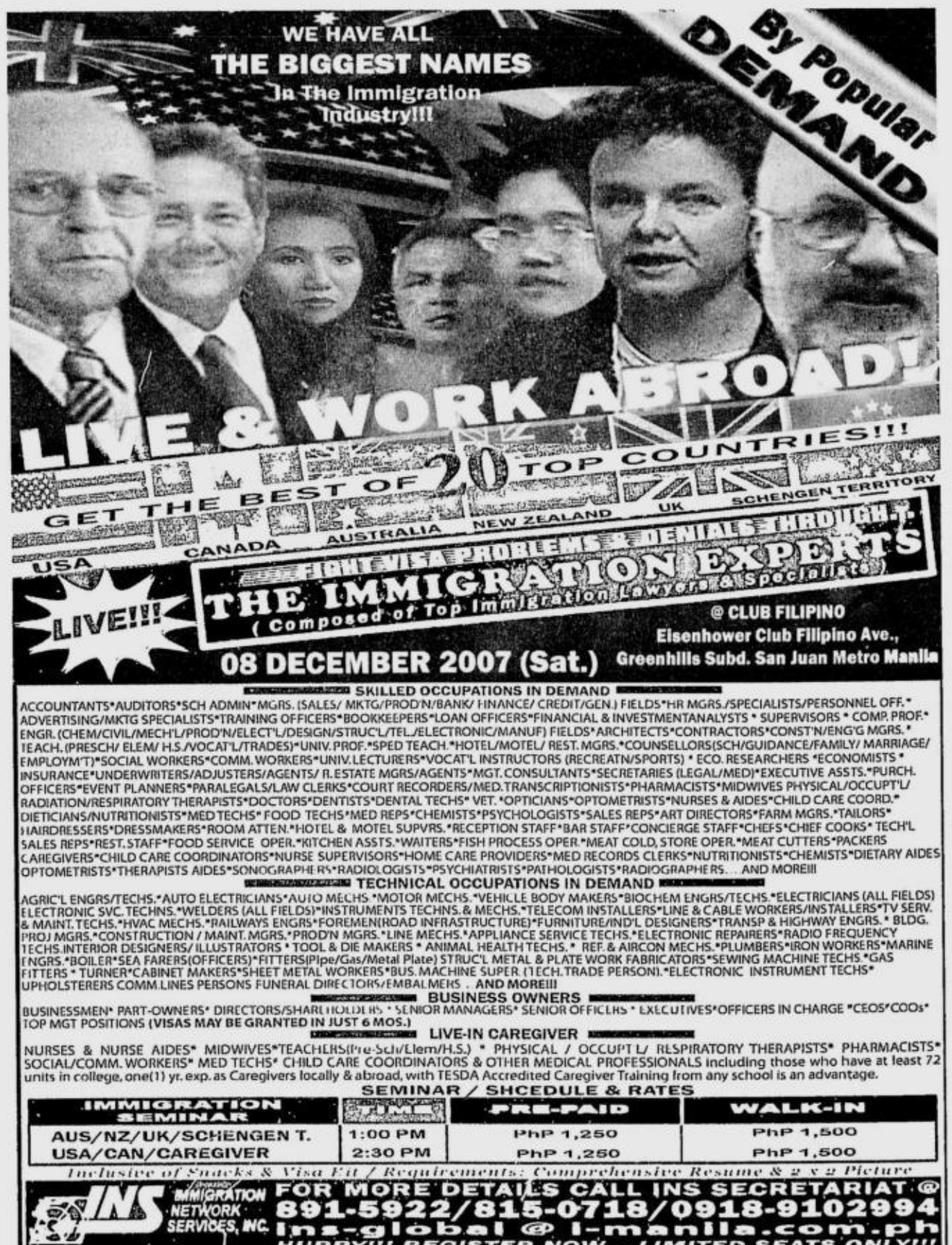

SKILLED OCCUPATIONS IN DEMAND

ACCOUNTANTS*AUDITORS*SCH ADMIN*MGRS. (SALES/ MKTG/PROD'N/BANK/ FINANCE/ CREDIT/GEN.) FIELDS*HR MGRS./SPECIALISTS/PERSONNEL OFF.* ADVERTISING/MKTG SPECIALISTS*TRAINING OFFICERS*BOOKKEEPERS*LOAN OFFICERS*FINANCIAL & INVESTMENTANALYSTS * SUPERVISORS * COMP. PROF.* ENGR. (CHEM/CIVIL/MECH'L/PROD'N/ELECT'L/DESIGN/STRUC'L/TEL./ELECTRONIC/MANUF) FIELDS*ARCHITECTS*CONTRACTORS*CONST'N/ENG'G MGRS.* TEACH. (PRESCH/ ELEM/ H.S./VOCAT'L/TRADES)*UNIV. PROF.*SPED TEACH.*HOTEL/MOTEL/ REST. MGRS.*COUNSELLORS(SCH/GUIDANCE/FAMILY/ MARRIAGE/ EMPLOYM'T)*SOCIAL WORKERS*COMM. WORKERS*UNIV. LECTURERS*VOCAT'L INSTRUCTORS (RECREATN/SPORTS) * ECO. RESEARCHERS *ECONOMISTS * INSURANCE*UNDERWRITERS/ADJUSTERS/AGENTS/ R. ESTATE MGRS/AGENTS*MGT. CONSULTANTS*SECRETARIES (LEGAL/MED)*EXECUTIVE ASSTS.*PURCH. OFFICERS*EVENT PLANNERS*PARALEGALS/LAW CLERKS*COURT RECORDERS/MED. TRANSCRIPTIONISTS*PHARMACISTS*MIDWIVES PHYSICAL/OCCUPT'L/ RADIATION/RESPIRATORY THERAPISTS*DOCTORS*DENTISTS*DENTAL TECHS* VET. *OPTICIANS*OPTOMETRISTS*NURSES & AIDES*CHILD CARE COORD.* DIETICIANS/NUTRITIONISTS*MED TECHS* FOOD TECHS*MED REPS*CHEMISTS*PSYCHOLOGISTS*SALES REPS*ART DIRECTORS*FARM MGRS.*TAILORS* HAIRDRESSERS*DRESSMAKERS*ROOM ATTEN.*HOTEL & MOTEL SUPVRS.*RECEPTION STAFF*BAR STAFF*CONCIERGE STAFF*CHEFS*CHIEF COOKS* TECH'L SALES REPS*REST. STAFF*FOOD SERVICE OPER.*KITCHEN ASSTS.*WAITERS*FISH PROCESS OPER.*MEAT COLD, STORE OPER.*MEAT CUTTERS*PACKERS CAREGIVERS*CHILD CARE COORDINATORS*NURSE SUPERVISORS*HOME CARE PROVIDERS*MED RECORDS CLERKS*NUTRITIONISTS*CHEMISTS*DIETARY AIDES OPTOMETRISTS*THERAPISTS AIDES*SONOGRAPHERS*RADIOLOGISTS*PSYCHIATRISTS*PATHOLOGISTS*RADIOGRAPHERS... AND MORE!!!

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THE INQUEST: The accused soldiers, their lawyers and supporters attend the preliminary investigation of the Trillanes-Lim revolt on Friday night at Camp Crame. RAFFY LERMA

GMA offers ₱1M reward

From page A1

and Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim.

The four managed to leave the five-star hotel just before police stormed in and arrested Trillanes, Lim and company.

The PNP has identified one of the men as a Corporal Colon, an employee of the Makati City government. He was seen on TV with Trillanes and Lim wearing a black camouflage uniform and a wig.

In response, Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay yesterday ordered an inquiry into the purported participation of City Hall employees in the failed revolt.

The mayor wrote a letter to Razon in which he said one Elmer Colon was indeed employed as a "job order security guard."

"Colon did not report for work on Nov. 29 and was later seen at the Manila Peninsula," Binay said.

He also cited reports that other City Hall employees were at the Peninsula during the Magdalo takeover.

"I have ordered our human resources development officers to go over the list of individuals arrested by the police and who are detained at Camp Crame," Binay said.

He said the identities of the other employees reportedly involved in the failed revolt had yet to be established.

In his letter, Binay assured Razon that the city government would work with the police investigation: "Please be assured that the city government will extend its full cooperation to the PNP. I have directed all concerned city officials to make themselves available."

Revolutionary gov't

Trillanes and Lim, backed by Faeldon and other soldiers belonging to the mutinous Magdalo group, walked out of a Makati courtroom and holed up at the Peninsula for about six hours, demanding that Ms Arroyo step down.

Then both in detention—Trillanes for the 2003 Oakwood mutiny and Lim for the purported failed coup in February 2006—they would have set up a revolutionary transition government with themselves as leaders had they mustered sufficient support from the public and the military, according to Senior Supt. Asher Dolina.

This was gathered from documents recovered by police from the Peninsula, said Dolina, chief of the CIDG-National Capital Region.

Quoting from the documents, Dolina said that as leaders of the new government, Trillanes and Lim would have ordered the relief of all officials of the Arroyo administration.

"They planned to hold on to power until governance [had been straightened out], or all remnants of the regime had been removed, and until the situation [had stabilized]. Then they would call for elections," Dolina told the INQUIRER.

He said the documents outlined the itinerary of Trillanes' group, beginning from the walkout from Judge Oscar Pimentel's courtroom all the way to their "proclamation" as leaders of the new government.

"The plans were very detailed, including the assignments of each member, the deployment of their firearms, from their descent to the elevator all the way to the march," Dolina said.

'Lean and mean' force

Among the programs of the new government was the elimination of the country's "mendicancy" vis a vis foreign lenders and of graft and corruption in the government, Dolina said.

He said the PNP and the Armed Forces would be trimmed to a "lean and mean" force.

"That would have meant taking out all the members of the military and police leadership, including myself," he said.

Dolina said Trillanes, Lim and company would have gotten support from active members of the PNP and AFP.

He said that in a statement to the police, Lim said the group had contacted some military units to "support" the revolt. "This was a rebellion with an armed component. We all saw that on TV—some of them were brandishing guns. But their expectations of [military troop movements] did not materialize," Dolina said.

He said there were enough evidence and grounds to prosecute Lim, Trillanes and company for rebellion.

Razon said the PNP was still examining the recovered documents to uncover the personalities involved in the failed revolt.

He said he was confident that investigators would be able to identify the suspects and determine how wide the plot was.

P10K, SIM cards

Speaking in Vice President Noli de Castro's Saturday radio program, "Para Sa Iyo, Bayan," Razon said the documents also indicated that the soldiers and other participants of the siege of the Peninsula were paid an initial amount of P10,000 and 10 SIM cards.

Razon said the documents detailed the amount each participant would get, as well as the designated task during the six-hour siege.

He said he agreed with AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, who was also a guest in the same program, that the walkout, march and takeover of portions of the five-star hotel had all been planned.

Razon also said the PNP was looking into the inaction of the Makati police, led by its deputy chief, while the revolt was unfolding.

He said the chief of police, Supt. Gilbert Cruz, was in Bangkok at that time on an official mission.

Interior Secretary Ricardo Puno earlier said Makati Mayor Binay, leader of the United Opposition, should explain why the latter did not act when the revolt was taking place in his jurisdiction.

Firearms

For his part, Esperon said the AFP had subjected Trillanes and Lim's military escorts, including the chief of security, to further debriefing and investigation.

He said only 12 of the 22 rebel officers charged in court joined Trillanes and Lim's march from the Makati City Hall to the Peninsula, along with seven discharged and seven active personnel.

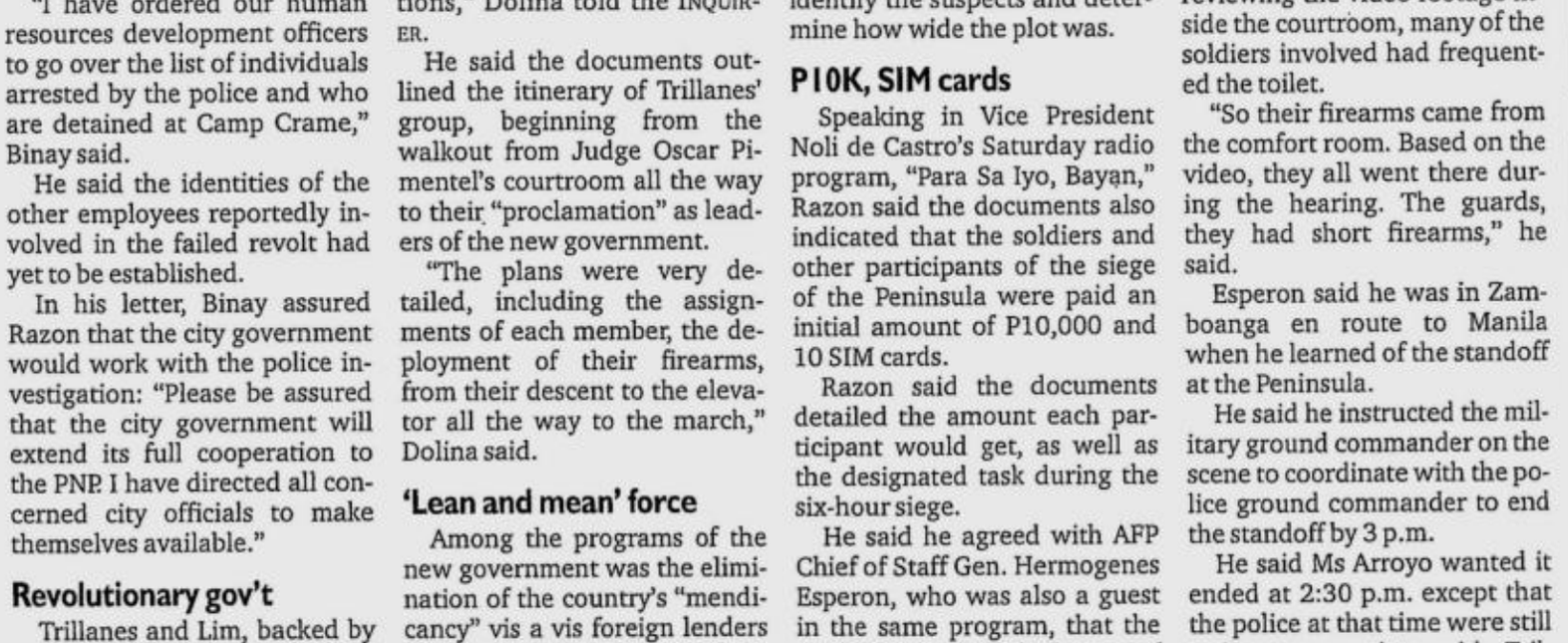
Asked where the long firearms of the rebels had come from, Esperon said that upon reviewing the video footage inside the courtroom, many of the soldiers involved had frequented the toilet.

"So their firearms came from the comfort room. Based on the video, they all went there during the hearing. The guards, they had short firearms," he said.

Esperon said he was in Zamboanga en route to Manila when he learned of the standoff at the Peninsula.

He said he instructed the military ground commander on the scene to coordinate with the police ground commander to end the standoff by 3 p.m.

He said Ms Arroyo wanted it ended at 2:30 p.m. except that the police at that time were still trying to negotiate with Trillanes and company to surrender. *With a report from Julie M. Aurelio*



NOT A MERRY CHRISTMAS: A Magdalo soldier was escorted out of the Multi-Purpose Hall where the five-hour inquest proceedings were held in Camp Crame on Friday conducted by prosecutors of the justice department. RAFFY LERMA

Manila Pen rebs to sue cops for illegal detention

By Alcuin Papa

THE LAWYERS OF THE 51 soldiers and civilians arrested in connection with the failed revolt at the Peninsula Manila hotel are considering filing charges of illegal detention against the Philippine National Police for failing to meet the 36-hour deadline to file charges against their clients.

However, state prosecutors maintained that the 36-hour deadline only applied to the submission of information of the charges to them by the PNP.

Ibarra Gutierrez III, legal counsel of some of the civilians accused, told the INQUIRER that based on the rules of the Department of Justice itself, the deadline applied to the whole inquest process.

"Any first-year law student knows that the 36-hour period means the delivery of the accused together with the charges before the court, not before the prosecutors. Our next step is to study the filing of illegal detention charges," he said.

Gutierrez said his clients had waived their right to a preliminary investigation to facilitate the dismissal of the cases.

In any case, the deadline to file charges against the accused should have lapsed at 7 a.m. yesterday. "The charges should have been filed by then. But that has not been accomplished yet; the accused are still under detention," Gutierrez said.

Considered submitted

On the other hand, State Prosecutor Aristotle Reyes told reporters after the inquest proceedings on Friday night that the process was lawful because the information or complaint provided by the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) against the accused was submitted or referred to them within the prescribed 36 hours.

Senior State Prosecutor Emmanuel Velasco also told the reporters that the complaint was "considered submitted for resolution."

At press time, the DOJ panel led by Velasco and composed of Reyes, Philip dela Cruz and Alvin Navarro were still trying to determine whether there was enough basis to bring charges against Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV and company.

Fifty-one civilians and soldiers have been accused of rebellion and inciting to rebellion, which are punishable with life imprisonment. Escaped Marine Capt. Nicanor Faeldon was also charged.

Insurrection

In the five-hour inquest proceedings at the Camp Crame Multi-Purpose Hall, the DOJ panel informed the accused that they were being charged with rebellion as defined in Article 134 of the Revised Penal Code.

Article 134 describes the crime of rebellion or insurrection as "rising publicly and taking arms against the government for the purpose of removing from the allegiance to said government or its laws, the territory of the Philippine Islands or any part thereof, of any body of land, naval or other armed forces, depriving the Chief Executive or the legislature, wholly or partially, of any of their powers or prerogatives."

The inquest panel also ordered the release of former University of the Philippines president Francisco Nemenzo and writer-actress Bibeth Orteza, a cancer survivor, on "humanitarian" grounds.

Nemenzo, 72, was released to the custody of Akbayan Rep. Risa Hontiveros-Baraquel. Virgilio Pablico, chief lawyer of the CIDG, did not object.

Guingona, Labayen

Earlier on Friday, former Vice President Teofisto Guingona and Infanta Bishop Julio Labayen were also released from detention. Labayen was released to the custody of Bishop Rolando Tirona at around 1:30 p.m. and taken to the Cardinal Santos Medical Center in San Juan City.

Guingona was released to the custody of his wife at around 5 p.m. and taken to the St. Luke's Medical Center in Quezon City. But yesterday morning, he returned to Camp Crame to visit his daughter Estrella, who had been arrested along with him.

All the accused are detained at the Camp Crame Custodial Center. Security was tight, with each of the accused allowed only three visitors.

Lower AIDS drug prices worldwide, solons urged

By Beverly T. Natividad

THE INTERNATIONAL PARLIAMENTARY Union (IPU) has called on member-legislators to draft laws in their countries that would slash the prices of HIV/AIDS drugs and help curb the rising number of deaths due to the disease.

In the first global IPU meeting on AIDS hosted by the Philippine Senate in Manila on Friday, lawmakers from around the world said that despite the availability of antiretroviral (ART) medications that could delay the advance of HIV/AIDS (human immunodeficiency virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), millions of infected people cannot afford the treatments.

In a presentation, Pregaluxmi Govender, a former member South Africa's parliament, said that in low- and middle-income countries, 72 percent of the 7.1 million people in need of ARTs were not receiving it due to the high cost of the treatments.

Treatment strategy

"These are all areas that the IPU will need to address in developing a comprehensive HIV/AIDS treatment strategy, which will foster increased access to medicines and which parliaments can commit to and act upon," Govender said.

While ART is not a cure for AIDS, she said it had been shown to prolong and improve a patient's quality of life by reducing the amount of the virus in the body.

Govender said that in Europe and the United States, the introduction of ART treatments cut AIDS deaths by over 70 percent. She said the estimated number of AIDS patients needing ARTs would grow to 10 million in 2010.

Closer to home, Roberto M. Pagdanganan, president and chief executive officer of Philippine HealthWatch Initiatives Inc., said in his presentation the monthly cost of HIV/AIDS treatment in the Philippines ranged from $290 to $425 due to the high cost of the medicines available here.

Parallel importation

Comparatively, the same treatment in Thailand ranges between $23 and $123 per month. Thailand was recently able to reduce drug prices by implementing the parallel importation and compulsory licensing of ARTs.

Govender stressed that lawmakers had a specific role in addressing the question of affordability of treatments because access to HIV/AIDS medication is affected by global trade agreements, or more particularly the World Trade Organization (WTO) agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights or TRIPS agreement.

TRIPS, which awards monopoly rights to patent holders over a period of time to ensure returns on their investment, also makes drugs unaffordable, particularly in poorer countries that do not have social security insurance and where patients have to pay for their treatment.

Govender explained that under the WTO, governments are empowered to exercise certain "flexibilities" to ensure the affordability of drugs.

9 Filipino UN peacekeepers hurt in mishaps

NINE FILIPINO PEACEKEEPERS SERVING with the United Nations missions in Timor-Leste and Kosovo were injured in three separate incidents last week, the Philippine Mission to the United Nations said yesterday.

In a report to Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo, Ambassador Hilario Davide Jr., Philippine Permanent Representative to the UN in New York, did not identify the peacekeepers but said all were officers of the Philippine National Police serving with the UN Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) and the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

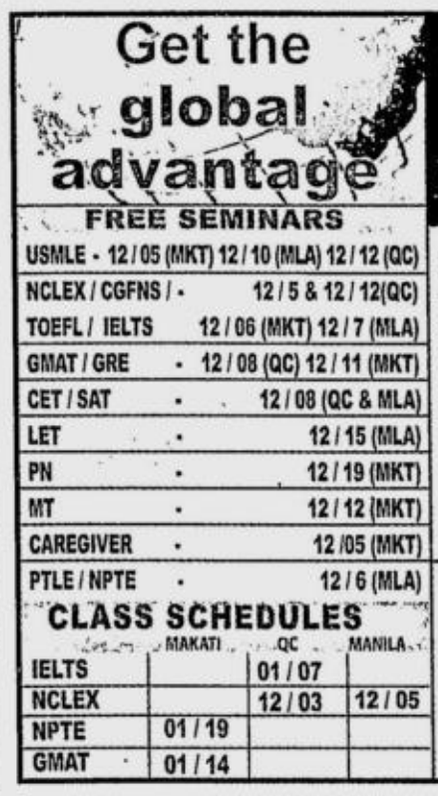
In the incident in Timor-Leste, Davide said a Filipino police officer was injured on Nov. 19 after he was mauled by a mob trying to prevent him from retrieving a motorcycle that had been reported stolen.

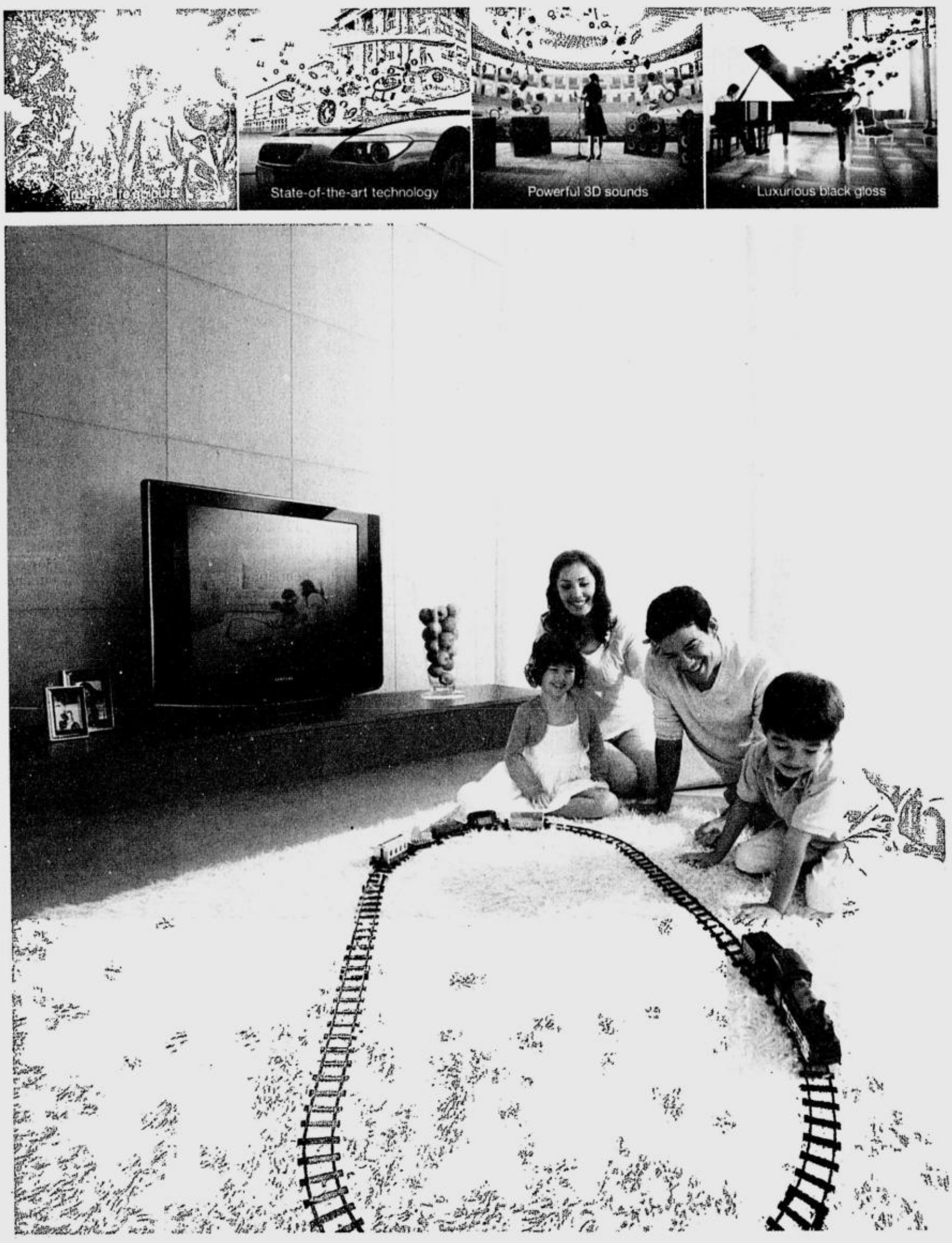
Quoting a report from the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), Davide said the police officer was evacuated to Darwin, Australia, for treatment.

In Kosovo, eight Filipino peacekeepers also from the PNP were hurt in two separate vehicular accidents that took place within hours of each other on Nov. 20.

In the first accident, a Filipino officer suffered a broken arm after the UN vehicle he and another UN police officer were riding in skidded and crashed into an embankment while trying to avoid another vehicle on the Zvecan-Mitrovica Highway.

Four hours later, seven Filipino officers, including a female officer, were hurt after the UN vehicles they were in spun out of control and rolled over on the Pristina-Mitrovica Highway. The DPKO said all seven were treated for shock and minor injuries. *Cynthia D. Balana*





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4 freedom fighters join heroes' roster

From page A1

Quezon Avenue in Quezon City.

The memorial, a project of the Bantayog ng Mga Bayani Foundation, was conceptualized in 1986 immediately after the first Edsa people power revolution to celebrate the ouster of the dictator Ferdinand Marcos and the restoration of democracy.

PDI founding chair

The wall was unveiled on Nov. 30, 1992, and the names of the first 65 martyrs were enshrined on it.

In 1993, the foundation decided to honor the heroes who died after the Edsa revolution but had sacrificed just the same in the name of truth, justice, peace, freedom and democracy during the Marcos years.

"They [the names on the wall] fought for freedom even at the cost of God's greatest gift, life itself," the foundation's vice chair, Jose de Jesus, said in his speech.

INQUIRER founding chair Eugenia D. Apostol, who was the guest of honor and speaker, said that the martyrs and heroes on the wall showed that "we cannot lose hope. We should not lose hope. We have to do something, something positive for the future."

AUGUST DELA CRUZ

HEROES OF OUR TIME REMEMBERED: The annual memorial to the men and women who fought the Marcos dictatorship was held at the Bantayog ng mga Bayani in Quezon City on Nov. 30, National Heroes Day. Keynote speaker Eugenia Duran-Apostol, Inquirer founding chair, is shown with Alfonso Yuchengco, chair of the Bantayog board, and former Sen. Jovito Salonga who's presenting Apostol with his book.

Film director

Known as a genius of film, Lino Brocka created movies that depicted the ills of Philippine society. He was also a street parliamentarian and nationalist who took every opportunity to oppose the Marcos dictatorship. He decried every form of media repression and pushed the limits of the film medium to show what needed to be shown.

Born in 1939, Brocka attended public schools and majored in English at the University of the Philippines.

After spending time as a missionary among lepers in Hawaii, he came home and honed his craft at the Philippine Educational Theater Association (Peta) where he worked as a jack of all trades. He went on to head Peta and then moved on to film directing.

Hailed at home and abroad, Brocka won many awards for his films, among them, "Tinimbang Ka Ngunit Kulang," "Maynila sa Kuko ng Liwanag," "Insiang," "Jaguar," "Bona" and "Angela Markado."

Fighting censorship

In 1983, Brocka co-founded the Concerned Artists of the Philippines. He believed that artists must be citizens first and fight all forms of censorship. After opposition leader Benigno Aquino was assassinated in 1983, Brocka directed the movie "Bayan Ko: Kapit sa Patalim" which was shown at the Cannes Film Festival and named Best Film of the Year by the British Film Institute. The Marcos regime banned its screening but the Supreme Court allowed the film to be shown.

In 1985, Lino was conferred the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Literature, Journalism and Communication Arts.

In 1986, President Corazon Aquino appointed Brocka to the Constitutional Commission that drafted the new Constitution. He opted out of the commission before his term ended in protest against certain provisions.

He died in a vehicular accident in 1991.

Like father, like sons

Rizal Yuyitung was the quintessential Chinese-Filipino who transcended race and language in order to be of service to society. He and his brother, Quintin, have been celebrated in a book for their contributions to the nationalist cause and to press freedom.

Rizal Yuyitung was born in Manila in 1922, of Chinese immigrant parents who named him after the national hero. He spent his early childhood in China.

Yuyitung was exposed quite early to journalism. His father, Yu Yi Tung, founded the Chinese Commercial News (CCN) in 1910. The Japanese killed the elder Yuyitung when he refused to turn his newspaper into a Japanese mouthpiece during World War II.

In 1945, the Yuyitung siblings revived the paper, with Rizal as editor. During the Macapagal administration in 1962, Rizal and his brother Quintin were arrested for the publication from 1949 to 1962 of articles perceived to be derogatory to the government and favorable to the communist cause. The brothers were later released.

However, their freedom again came under threat during the Marcos administration because they championed the recognition of the communist People's Republic of China.

The brothers' espousal of genuine assimilation of the Chinese into Philippine society also did not sit well with some sectors of the Chinese community bent on eventually returning to China.

Deported to Taiwan

On May 4, 1970, upon orders of Marcos, the Yuyitung brothers were snatched and secretly deported to face trial in Taiwan for crimes they had not committed.

They were found guilty of publishing Western news agency reports from the Associated Press and United Press International, among others. Quintin was jailed for two years and Rizal for three years. Top Filipino journalists and lawyers called their detention and trial farcical.

Upon the declaration of martial law in 1972, the military again swooped down on CCN and arrested Rizal's wife, Veronica, a painter.

Released in 1973, Rizal, like his brother Quintin, sought political asylum in Canada. He died there on April 17, 2007.

Ochie Baes could have been a great musician. Born in 1948, Baes came from a music-loving family. He played the piano, the guitar, the flute and other wind instruments.

Friends describe Baes as an organizer, a comrade and guru, a "crush *ng bayan* (a heartthrob)." He took up agricultural chemistry at the University of the Philippines in Los Baños (UPLB). As a student, he cofounded the Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan chapter at UPLB. He chaired the student council. After graduating cum laude in 1969, he joined the UPLB faculty as chemistry instructor.

Prison songs

When martial law was declared in 1972, Baes eluded arrest by going underground. He organized farmers in Laguna until his arrest in 1973. He was detained at Camp Crame and Bicutan where he composed songs now considered classics by activists. Among them are "Huwad ng Kalayaan," "Mutya" and "Kay Taas ng Pader."

Released in 1974, Baes returned to teaching but continued his underground organizing work.

In 1982, Baes went to the United States for post-graduate studies. While there, he joined the anti-Marcos solidarity movement. After completing his doctorate, Baes taught in Japan for a year before returning to UPLB.

Baes and his colleagues founded the Center for Environmental Concerns-Philippines and Agham, an organization of nationalist scientists. He worked to expose the toxic and hazardous wastes in the US bases here.

Baes suffered from an enlarged heart, but failing health did not stop his environmental campaigns. He died on Dec. 21, 2006, of kidney failure.

Orator

Nicolas Solana Jr. was born in Davao City in 1949 to parents who were educators.

Solana showed leadership qualities even at a young age. He also liked theater. A victory in an oratorical contest got him a scholarship to the Ateneo de Manila University where he took up economics. His friends describe Solana as a regular, fun-loving guy. He joined theater productions, the glee club and a popular singing group, the Ambivalent Crowd.

After graduating in 1969, he returned to Davao City, enrolling at the Ateneo de Davao School of Law. His eyes were opened to social realities, and he joined the Malayang Lipunan headed by a Jesuit.

Finishing his law course in 1973, shortly after the imposition of martial law, Solana did not take the bar or any of the lucrative jobs being offered to him. He worked at the Davao Research Foundation.

At some point, he came to a crossroad. In April 1975, he joined the rebel movement in the mountains of Davao, taking on the underground name "Ka Noni." A few days later, on April 17, 1975, Solana's group was ambushed. Ka Noni was among the dead. He was 26 years old.

Stories after storm: Blessings . . .

From page A1

preschool for the underprivileged, offering nursery, kinder and prep education for free.

"We cater to the poorest of the poor. Our students come from the slums, market sites, dumps and homes along the railroads," said Eden Mirabueno, 63, the school's founder and director.

Mirabueno, who takes her motto from Mother Teresa's "Give until it hurts with love, until you feel the pain," said Reming made her marvel at the fathomless ways of God.

"Folks asked, why did God allow this calamity to happen? If he is a merciful and loving God, why did he allow people who are faithful to him to die? There are no answers," she said.

All she knows is that in a weird way, Reming gave Albay some unexpected blessings.

Mirabueno cited the family of Jason who lived in a house made of galvanized iron and cardboard boxes. When Reming struck, the house was carried away by floodwaters. Now the family lives at the relocation site in Anislag, a barrio of Daraga, with a modest house and lot given by the government.

More schools

A retired education district supervisor for Daraga, Mirabueno said she was very happy to see that 90 percent of the newly constructed schools buildings in Albay were funded with money from here and abroad.

If it had not been for Reming, it would have taken years to repair and build new schools, since funds were limited and not available, she said.

Visiting a concrete house, she learned that its repair and renovation came from a balikbayan brother.

"Typhoon Reming is really some Albayanos' biggest blessing. So many tourists are coming, contributing to the economy of Legazpi and the municipalities of Cagsawa, where the typhoon destroyed houses and recreation areas but not the ruins of the church in the eruption of Mayon in 1816," she said.

Mirabueno said most of those who took shelter in the school at the height of Reming were the families of the students of Jardin de Eden Academy.

"We just shared resources. The families pooled their relief rations, cooked out in the garden then ate together. It was like a feast," she said.

With no light and water for almost three months, neighbor shared their food resources, distributing plates of *pansit*, vegetables and *adobo*. It was easy enough to reach out for help since fences and walls had come crashing down.

A neighbor who owned a generator shared electricity with neighboring houses. At the Daraga Municipal Plaza, tanks of water were made available for free to all. A big television screen in front of the Daraga Municipal Hall entertained viewers in the evening.

At the hilltop church of Our Lady of the Gate, the parish priest and Social Action director and staff distributed food and household items to more than 9,000 families for 10 months. The rich and the poor were united in their effort to help the victims of the typhoon. Donations have not stopped coming.

Lily Mujar, a nursery teacher at the academy, related how Reming brought together family members and neighbors.

Mujar and her three children live in a small compound along with her three siblings and their families. Although they live in adjacent apartments and get along just fine, Mujar said she and her siblings were not particularly close.

"We focus on our own families," she said.

Letting go of pride

Last year, a rift developed between her youngest sister and older brother. The two stopped speaking to each other because of a disagreement over a family property.

At the height of Reming, the older brother relented. When his youngest sister's apartment was swamped with flood waters, he promptly came to her aid and helped her family to evacuate.

In the aftermath of the typhoon, the siblings and their then ailing mother also got together to clean up the compound. They pooled their funds to replace roofs that had been blown away.

Mujar's family also readily shared their resources with their neighbors in the aftermath of Reming.

"Because their water supply was cut, our neighbors went to our compound to take a bath and wash their clothes," she said.

She also recalled how two families from neighboring Barangay Bañag sought shelter at their compound when Reming struck.

Students drop out

Mirabueno started the academy in June 2006. The school initially registered 51 enrollees, but around half of the student population dropped out in the aftermath of Reming.

The houses of some students were completely swept away by floods triggered by the typhoon.

"Some of our pupils' families had to be relocated to far-flung resettlement areas. Most of them couldn't afford to pay the transportation fare everyday, so they never came back to school," said Mujar.

Around 31 pupils are currently enrolled in the academy, aged three to five years old, from different villages.

The academy holds two batches of two-hour classes every weekday afternoon, with the curriculum following that prescribed by the Department of Education.

God-, family-centered

In all subjects, Mirabueno makes sure that the lessons are God-centered and family-oriented.

Two of Mirabueno's six children also teach at the academy, with a 22-year-old son acting as the volunteer principal and computer teacher, and a 29-year-old daughter serving as the music teacher.

The Jardin de Eden Academy is funded from the family's own savings and the little that the parents of the pupils can give, as well as pledges from government officials and businessmen.

P1,500 per child per year

Mirabueno said the school can survive on an annual allocation of P1,500 per child, but admitted that since donations came irregularly, they often experienced shortages of food and school supplies.

Montemaria mega shrine not yet up but healing stones abound

From page A1

This would be dwarfed by the planned mega-shrine on the five-hectare pilgrimage site, which would include a statue of Our Lady of the Poor as tall as the Statue of Liberty in New York or that of Christ the Redeemer in Rio de Janeiro.

Healing stones

By compulsion, perhaps wanting a memento of what he believed was sacred ground, Baltazar picked up a number of stones.

He gave a stone to each of his companions before embarking on the trip home.

The next day, he received a phone call from one of them.

The frantic, weeping parishioner was saying that on the previous night, he rubbed the stone on his shoulders, which he had not been able to move for years. And now, he said, he could move his shoulders and even lift his arm.

The news spread like wildfire. People came to Baltazar asking for a stone. He handed six more stones to them.

More reports of healing flooded the parish—cancer cells disappearing, pain vanishing instantly, chemotherapy schedules cancelled, dead kidneys revived.

Baltazar soon found himself running out of stones. On Oct. 11, he embarked on a second trip to Montemaria.

He took only 12 stones—after the 12 apostles, he said.

Pilgrimage

After three days, Baltazar had only three stones left. One was sent to Italy for a parishioner's ailing brother.

He thought: "Why wait for the future when Father Suarez returns? We can get the Lord's healing now. Montemaria is a sacred place of healing, just like Lourdes and Fatima. The stones are related to the Holy Eucharist."

Although Baltazar had never met Suarez, he asked permission from the latter's aides to conduct a parish-wide pilgrimage to Montemaria.

Instantly, 250 parishioners enlisted. In the end, there were 400 of them in a convoy of six buses and four vans, coming from Meycauayan, Obando, Valenzuela, Malolos and Plaridel.

ARTIST'S SKETCH of the proposed Montemaria Shrine on five hectares of pilgrimage site in Batangas dominated by a statue of Our Lady of the Poor.

On his third trip to Montemaria on Oct. 22, Baltazar brought an army of believers.

He asked the pilgrims to bring stones to replace what they were to get. He told them: One must give back something in return, not just take. What if the place runs out of stones?

In Montemaria, the pilgrims took about 5,000 stones, and replaced about 4,000.

A Mass was celebrated, after which the pilgrims wrote their names and illnesses on the stems of white roses that they placed at the foot of a steel crucifix.

A woman gave a tearful testimony of how her stage-4 cancer of the ovary had vanished into thin air, shocking her doctors.

The pilgrims released balloons before returning home to proclaim the love and mercy of the healing Lord.

Healing reports go global

A week later, a doctor who was healed of cancer had *stampitas* of St. Francis of Assisi printed and distributed to parishioners.

An ailing woman eventually reported that because the healing stones were hard to come by, she put a *stampita* on her belly and found that her pains had disappeared by the next morning.

As of this writing, more reports of the healing stones of Montemaria are spreading beyond Bulacan.

Recently, I went to Meycauayan to interview on camera Baltazar and five women who have been healed. This is for a new Youtube video for the Cyber Healing Center, for the whole world to see, especially Filipinos abroad who have seen the first Youtube on Suarez's healing prayer.

Lolit Esguerra writes: "I prayed with Father Suarez his Youtube healing prayer and the pain in my shoulders, which no medicine could remove, disappeared."

The Lord's healing is becoming global through the Internet. He heals by touch, by cellular phone, or by land line.

Too old to go to church, 87-year-old Rosella Purugganan said all her pains vanished after she heard Suarez's healing Mass on television.

In Medjugorje, Mary's message was that the Philippines would one day become a global spiritual center. Was the message about Montemaria?

Healing of the poor

Suarez, who hails from Taal, Batangas, is a member of a small congregation in Canada called Companions of the Cross.

He says his mission is "the healing of the poor."

He lives in a suitcase, travelling to bring the healing of the Lord to other Third World countries in Asia, Africa and South America.

In his visit to the Philippines in December 2006, his healing Mass in Marilao was attended by a staggering 10,000 people and covered live by Radio Veritas.

Suarez plans to return this month from his base in Canada.

For inquiries, contact eastwind@motherignaciahealing-ministry.com.

Uphold raps vs ex-AFP comptroller, SC urged

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THE SPECIAL PROSECUTOR HAS ASKED the Supreme Court to uphold previous rulings of the Sandiganbayan affirming the validity of the P300-million plunder charges against retired Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia, a former Armed Forces of the Philippines comptroller alleged to have amassed enormous unexplained wealth.

Garcia had earlier petitioned the high court for a review of the Sandiganbayan rulings, saying the antigraft court had committed a grave abuse of discretion when it upheld the authority of the Special Prosecutor to file a "defective" information in the plunder case against him.

Garcia also questioned the Sandiganbayan's denial of his motion to quash the charges, challenging the authority of then acting deputy special prosecutor Humphrey Monteroso, now deputy Ombudsman for Mindanao, to file the charges against him.

Ill-gotten wealth

He claimed that under the revised rules on criminal procedure, it should not have been Monteroso but the investigating prosecutor who should have prepared the information against him and his family.

He said Monteroso also did not have the authority to sign the certification of the information, which should have been approved by the Ombudsman or his deputy.

Garcia is accused of amassing about P303 million in ill-gotten wealth through kickbacks that he allegedly collected while serving as a comptroller of the Armed Forces.

His wife, Clarita, and children, Ian Carl, Juan Paulo and Timothy Mark were named as corespondents for allegedly conspiring with Garcia.

Lack of merit

But in a 23-page memorandum, the Office of the Special Prosecutor urged the high court to deny Garcia's petition for lack of merit.

The OSP agreed that no information may be filed and no complaint may be dismissed without the written authority or approval of the Ombudsman in cases that fall under the jurisdiction of the Sandiganbayan.

But it said former Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo had granted Monteroso "sufficient authority" to prepare, sign and file the information against the Garcias before the antigraft court.

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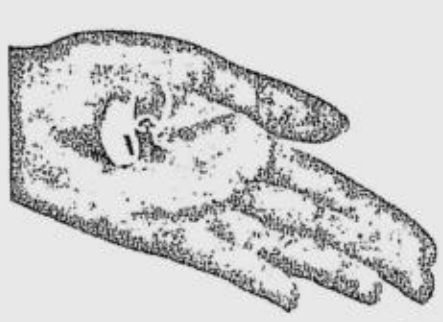

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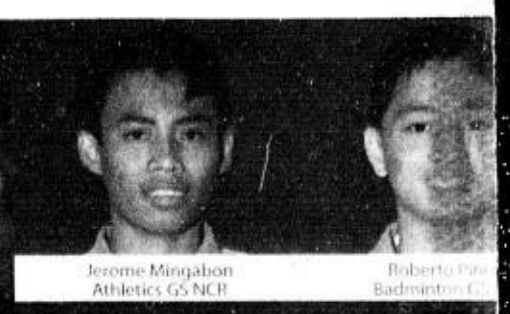

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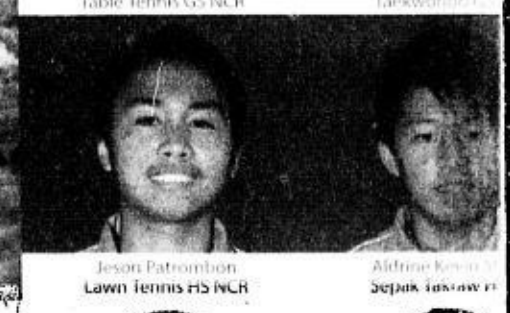

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2007

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Incorrigible

TALLEYRAND SAID OF THE BOURBON DYNASTY of France, that despite the French Revolution, they learned nothing—and forgot nothing. This remains the textbook indictment of all reactionary regimes throughout the ages, including the present administration.

EDITORIAL

When Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV and Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim strolled out of the Makati City Hall to the Manila Peninsula Hotel last Thursday morning, the military escort assigned to contain them accompanied them instead. Surely that was the first of the many disquieting lessons that could have been learned that day.

There were the motorists giving thumbs-up signs to the marching rebels. There was the stock market shrugging the whole thing off, closing higher instead of closing down, even as Vivian Yuchengco shrieked for a bloodbath. There were the hotel guests themselves who insisted on posing for pictures with the mutineers.

Add to that scene, the eerie quiet that reigned in the various camps of the military, including Camp Aguinaldo. Instead of falling over themselves to line up before the cameras and vow loyalty to the government, the generals and other top brass made themselves scarce. Civilian officials, on the other hand, ended up admitting they knew something had been afoot, but obviously they either dismissed things out of hand, or were caught flatfooted despite the intelligence they had received.

Most of all, while no one rallied around the rebels, neither did anyone rally to defend the administration.

There was an hour or two during which the country waited with bated breath—to see if the rebels would trigger defections from within the military. It was obvious that among those waiting with bated breath was the administration itself. It remains to be seen if the government frustrated such a possibility, by steadily and relentlessly applying pressure on the rebels in the hotel; or whether the police finally moved, only when it knew it wouldn't be confronted by the armed forces—even as the armed forces clearly washed its hands of any efforts to apprehend the rebels.

Either way, it was perhaps a situation that ended up more dicey than it should have. Officialdom should be pondering how Trillanes and Lim could have walked out of court unimpeded, thus triggering a standoff; and why public disappointment seems to be pinned as much on Trillanes, together with Lim, for not dying with his spurs on and for having made a pointless stand. Instead, officialdom has taken to thundering about the need for everyone to submit to the rule of law.

Which only goes to show that the officials of the Arroyo administration have learned nothing—and forgotten nothing.

For what was all the growling about submitting to the rule of law? It was about the police and the administration taking out their frustrations on the media.

Much has been said about how Trillanes, for one, proved himself to be a vain and empty-headed posturer, when he holed up in the hotel, only to surrender a few hours later. Vainer, and even more empty-headed was the posturing of the police, who, after smashing and entering the hotel and flooding it with tear gas, then had to exercise self-restraint in apprehending Trillanes: and so they took it out on the media.

The underlying message here is government continues along its merry way—behaving as if it were above the law, and beyond the law—while insisting that the law must apply inexorably to those who question government's handling of the law. Trillanes, the one-time whistle-blower, began as someone pleading for reforms, who was betrayed by President Macapagal-Arroyo, and who thus rebelled. Oakwood and then his election to the Senate should have been wake-up calls, but this latest caper of his only proves that if he is incorrigible, so is the administration incapable of being roused from its stupefying addiction to business-as-usual.

Trillanes had nothing to lose, the government had everything to gain by letting him shoot his mouth off in the Senate. Instead, they bottled him up, and when he shot out of court like a cork from a bottle, the whole country had to duck. And where the Palace could claim victory, it inflicted on itself a moral defeat, by imposing an illegal curfew, merely as a test to see if the public would submit. Once more, government itself has raised the ante against itself.

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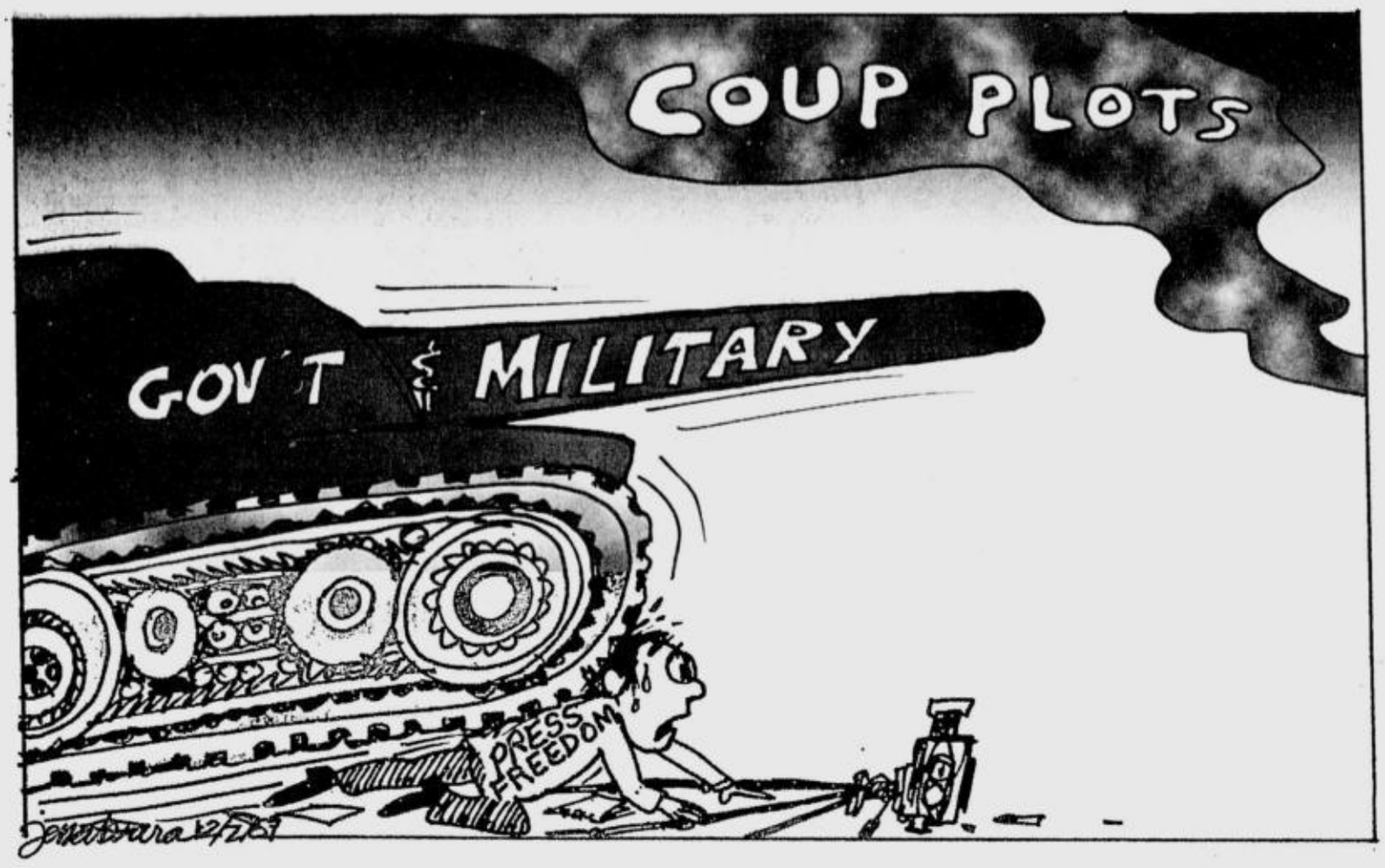


'The Hero of the Hotel'

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

UTTER DISGUST—THAT IS WHAT I FELT when I watched the foolishness that happened at the Peninsula Hotel last Thursday. It left me nothing but contempt for the Armed Forces of the Philippines for its overbearing, abusive, illegal and stupid conduct. It was unbecoming an officer and a gentleman, the usual accusatory language in court martial proceedings. The generals and soldiers who participated in that putsch all deserve death by musketry for the murder of the Bill of Rights.

This is no defense of Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV and company, who again acted characteristically as in the Oakwood mutiny four years ago. They rashly walked out of the court trial, marched to the Peninsula Hotel as if they were conquering heroes, made it appear that they were making a last desperate stand to the death against the cohorts of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in defense of their principles. But they in the end acted as usual as defeated malcontents and meekly surrendered to the soldiers.

The men of the questionable President stood loyally behind her and spouted invocations of the rule of law that they pontificated should be observed in this land of the free. Lito Atienza, Ignacio Bunye et al. were dutifully garrulous but Angelo Reyes, the former general, was meekly silent. Perhaps he knew that his colleagues did not know that the rule of law they were invoking was being violated by their own Red Guards.

AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, who was in charge of the military operations, was the expert in the overkill. His misnamed intelligence people must have informed him that the rebel group holed up in the Peninsula consisted only of some 30 unarmed persons, including Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim who was probably their commander by reason of his rank. Not Trillanes, who was only a resigned and indicted lower officer although he is an inactive senator.

Given such a small group to conquer, Esperon who should now be hailed as the "Hero of the Hotel," chose to send Marines fully-armed and in frightening numbers (about one battalion?) to subdue the outnumbered enemy. More than this, and absolutely and foolishly needlessly, he commanded several tanks to support their attack as if they were fighting in Iwo Jima. One tank in fact actually barged into the undefended Peninsula and destroyed one of its doors.

Meanwhile, as Esperon waited for the rebels to hoist the white flag against the overwhelming odds of the AFP, he ordered the arrest of the media people who were covering the little war for the information of the nation. The TV cameras and other equipment of the technical people were confiscated, together with the cell phones, laptops and possibly also the lighters of the reporters. All these were considered dangerous propaganda material against the AFP that should, therefore, not be allowed. Worse, not only their possessions but the reporters themselves were prohibited as threats to the national security. They were all arrested, their hands tied like the Magdalo rebels, and taken to Bicutan for investigation and detention.

Realizing that they should defend the Alamo another day, Trillanes and his defiant group threw in the towel and meekly submitted to their captors. Somebody said that GMA had issued the needed warrant, but the Cabinet was quick to piously announce that even the President herself could not do this because the power belonged only to the courts. At any rate, the rebels were all silent and unassuming as they joined the smiling former Vice President Teofisto Guingona in the barred bus to Bicutan.

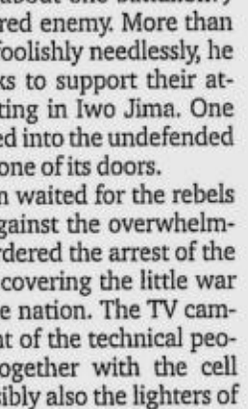
In all the confusion, which should be comical were it not for the violation of the Bill of Rights by the clumsy and authoritative behavior of Esperon and his flunkies, the expertise, courage and *savoir-faire* of the lady reporters who were covering the event stood out and deserve cordial admiration and congratulations. Especially commendable were Karen Davila, Korina Sanchez, Ces Drilon and Pinky Webb of ABS-CBN and Sandra Aguinaldo and Susan Enriquez of GMA, as well as others whose names I did not catch and to whom I extend penitent apologies. They are all worthy members of the Fourth Estate and deserve to be "First Ladies" in the future.

Briefed in Laguna about the happenings in the Peninsula, President Arroyo rushed back to Malacañang and was pleased to know that her questionable title was still intact. As expected, she took the floor, i.e., the mike (not her husband) and informed the nation in fluent extemporaneous Tagalog that all was well, she was safe, and Trillanes and his men would be dealt with according to the rule of law. The television stations switched to their regular programs, and the media people were probably fed a late dinner of sorts at last before they were released.

This is not the end of the incident as there are still many matters to be settled, such as the occupation and the damage caused to the Peninsula Hotel, which must be wondering whom to sue. But the more important question is the gross violation of the Bill of Rights that was brashly ignored by the Armed Forces the Philippines and their hypocritical masters in the Cabinet who sanctimoniously pleaded the rule of law that their minions were desecrating.

Know when?

MOMENTS



Fr. Jerry M. Orbos, SVD

THE STORY IS TOLD ABOUT A PARISH PRIEST who saw a piece of paper at the foot of Jesus' statue and on it was written the prayer: "Lord, give me a bike!" He smiled, feeling so edified with the simple faith of a little child. The next day, he saw another note: "Lord, still no bike. Please give me a bike!" On the third day, the priest was surprised that the statue of Mama Mary was gone, and where it stood was a piece of paper with a note that said: "Lord, you better give me a bike or you'll never again see your mother alive."

* * *

Today is the first Sunday of Advent. In today's gospel (Mt. 24, 37-44), we are reminded that the coming of the Lord is something that will come as a surprise, something that is totally beyond our control. In life, some people think they can control almost anyone or anything. But these people are in for a big surprise for the Son of Man will come to them at a time they do not know, at an hour they do not expect.

* * *

Little children grow up to become adults. No problem about that. The problem is when adults start playing God with their lives and with the lives of other people. Then we have a case here of "adultery," not so much in the sense of the Sixth Commandment, but in the sense of adulterating life's simplicity and innocence. The season of Advent reminds us of our mortality and dependence on God. This is a very timely and important reminder for proud people—the so-called "grown-ups" who have become so blinded by their earthly wealth and so drunk with worldly power. Message? You too will die.

* * *

The last thing I do every night before I sleep is to kneel and surrender everything to God in prayer. For who of us know for certain that we will wake up again in the morning? The first thing I do in the morning is to kneel again, and thank God I am still alive, and offer unto Him in prayer whatever mission and undertakings lie ahead. It is prayer that keeps us focused on God, and reminds us of our mortality, our life mission, our dependence on God and our final destination.

* * *

The act of kneeling in prayer is in itself an act of humility and surrendering. This is something I learned in my minor seminary days in Christ the King Mission Seminary way back in the '60s. I thank my "formators," like Fr. Mike Padua, SVD, who have planted in me such simple but meaningful prayer habits. Or the habit of carrying a rosary in my left pocket which I learned from my Mama at an early age; or saying the sign of the cross when passing by a church which I learned from Papa as a little boy. The season of Advent asks us: What have you done in life? What are you leaving behind when you are gone?

* * *

Advent reminds us to look around us and see with our hearts the poverty and suffering of our people, and to ask ourselves if we are contributors to, if not perpetuators of, the sad situation because of our sins of commission or omission. Advent thus strongly reminds us of our mission to share, to let go, and to let God.

* * *

Today we remember people with disabilities. The many things we do with ease, and which we often take for granted, are done with so much effort and challenge by our brothers and sisters who have physical handicaps. Let us be more sensitive of their needs, but let us also be aware of their capacities and their achievements. We don't pity them. Pity rather those who have everything going good and easy in this life but who have forgotten goodness and God. They have a lot of explaining to do when their hour finally and suddenly comes.

* * *

Fr. Nonet Legaspi, parish priest of Jesus, Lord of Divine Mercy Parish in Mapayapa Village, Quezon City, is one shepherd who has a heart for persons with disabilities.

He says Mass for the deaf using sign language every Sunday at 10 a.m. This "enabler" should inspire all of us, and should lead us to question ourselves: Am I an "enabler," or am I a "disabler"? Do I empower people, or do I overpower people?

* * *

Dec. 8 is the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. Amid many trials and problems, let us not lose sight of our Mother who walks with us in this "valley of tears," and who will show us, after earthly exile, Her Son, Jesus. On a personal note, join me in thanking the Lord for Mama who turns 86 on Dec. 8.

* * *

As we prepare for Christmas, let us remember that Christmas is not going to happen in the malls, in the Christmas trimmings, or in Christmas parties. It has to happen in the heart, and the first thing to do is to clean our hearts by making a good confession. Yes, let us go back to our hearts, and there find Him. One with you in preparing for the Lord's birthday.

* * *

Inviting everyone to the Zonta Manila I International Bazaar, Sunday, Dec. 9, 2007 to be held at the ballroom of Intercontinental Hotel at 8 a.m., for the benefit of Zontaville Gawad Kalinga. There will be a Mass at 8 p.m.

* * *

A moment with the Lord:

Lord, I don't know **when**, but I hope to see you and be with you **then**. Amen.

Why the Trillanes caper failed

WITH DUE RESPECT

Artemio V. Panganiban

THE FORCEFUL TAKEOVER OF THE MANILA Peninsula Hotel by Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV, Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim and their supporters ended in six hours after lawmen crashed an armored personnel carrier into the front entrance and lobbed tear gas into the foyer. General Lim said the rebels wanted to "remove Ms Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo from the presidency and form a new government."

Swift police-military action. Why did the caper fail? **First**, the police and the military acted swiftly. They stormed the make-do bastion with superior, some say "ruthless," force. They did not give the stunned nation any chance to assess the situation. Former Presidents Corazon C. Aquino, Fidel V. Ramos and Joseph E. Estrada were still "monitoring the situation." The Black and White Movement and the militants were caught flat-footed. Before they could react, the "situation" was over.

Second, many people may be disenchanted with GMA but they were not about ready to plunge into an unknown future. When asked who would lead the new government, General Lim answered with a noncommittal, "They will surface in due time." In contrast, Edsa I had Cory Aquino and Edsa II, GMA.

Besides, unlike in 1986 and 2001, the economy now is on the rise and the business community will not accept an uncertain answer. If there is anything that business abhors, it is unpredictability. It would rather tolerate a known evil than venture into uncertainty. That the business community did not take the latest Trillanes adventure seriously is shown by the stable stock market and peso-dollar exchange rate that were concluded at noon, long before the standoff ended at past 5 p.m.

Absence of Cardinal Sin. Third, with Jaime Cardinal Sin already in the Great Beyond, there is really no one with clout, daring and stature to lead a non-violent revolution. An Edsa I or Edsa II uprising is possible only if a critical mass of people got together to protect Trillanes and Lim, as they did Juan Ponce Enrile and Fidel Ramos in 1986. Or to show their outrage over the refusal of the Senate to open the second envelope during Erap's impeachment trial. A purely military takeover is unacceptable.

During the incumbency of Cardinal Sin, the Archdiocese of Manila was composed of more than 300 parishes and 70 parochial schools directly under his sway. At his call, each of these parishes and schools could easily produce 500 warm bodies, or a total of nearly 200,000, who could stay in rallies indefinitely without much logistical problems (they brought their own provisions), and who were so organized they marched to the beat of a single drummer. Indeed, he produced the critical mass, who were joined by many, many others.

After his death, the archdiocese was chopped into six groups, the Dioceses of Caloocan, Cubao, Novaliches, Parañaque, Pasig and, of course, Manila (composed of Manila proper, Makati, Mandaluyong, Pasay and San Juan). As a result, the archdiocese now holds direct jurisdiction over only about a fourth of its original size. Equally important, the shepherds of the six new dioceses have different priorities, and political action is not always their topmost.

Wait for 2010. Fourth, many people believe in the rule of law, the primacy of our Constitution and the strengthening of our democratic institutions, and would rather wait for 2010 to replace GMA. Our constitutional brinkmanship in both Edsas is enough. In fact, Edsa I is regarded as an "extra-constitutional" exercise because the leadership change was not consistent with the then existing Constitution.

But the condition *sine qua non* for this democratic process of changing presidents in 2010 is a credible Commission on Elections. No more "Hello Garci" and no more fraudulent election automation! That is why the appointment of an independent and competent Comelec chair come Feb. 2, 2008 is essential in ensuring the viability of this alternative, and in restoring the trust of our people in GMA.

As I warned in an earlier column (Oct. 21, 2007), if she does not appoint a credible Comelec chair (and other critical officials like the chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Commission on Audit chair) by February next year, "she will sink so deeply in self-gratification that even the patient people of goodwill—those of us who are still willing to give her a last chance at good governance—will lose all hope in her redemption."

New initiative. Another danger in waiting for 2010 is a constitutional change. Though struck down by the Supreme Court in 2006 during my term as chief justice, nothing prevents the partisans of GMA from making another try to keep her in power. This time, they will have the advantage of hindsight to avoid the pitfalls of the failed "Sigaw" initiative.

After February next year, three of the eight Supreme Court justices who thumbed down "Sigaw" would have retired. In 2009, six incumbents would also hang their black robes and could be replaced by GMA with "friendly" magistrates. That is why, vigilance in the selection of justices of integrity, independence, probity, competence and courage is so essential if our democracy must survive.

In closing, let me stress that I do not belittle Trillanes' goals for change. Reforms, indeed, our nation urgently needs. But, as I said in another column (July 8, 2007), "means are as important as ends." Our people elected Trillanes so he could pursue reforms in accordance with constitutional methods, no longer with military brawns.

* * *

Comments are welcome at chiefjusticepanganban@hotmail.com

From puzzlement to hilarity

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

REACTIONS TO THURSDAY'S EVENTS IN MAKATI range from puzzlement to hilarity. But rarely anger. It may be indicative of the circles I move in, but most everyone was willing to give Antonio Trillanes IV, Danilo Lim and their escorts—as well as the civilians who flocked to their side—the benefit of the doubt.

Many, indeed, agreed with their cause, but wondered why the military men chose to issue their call in such a manner and in such a place, and with apparent haste and spontaneity, even if the authorities claim it was a "well-planned" maneuver.

But if the kind of strategizing and logistical arrangements displayed by the Magdalo leaders is indicative of their training in the best military institutions, then we're really in a pickle. It was police forces, remember, who were deployed to go after the senator and his companions holed up at the Manila Peninsula. And while their "shock and awe" tactics may have gone overboard—ramming an APC through the hotel's front door and parking it beside the Christmas tree in the lobby—at least their movements had a clear goal and mission. But aside from reading their statements before TV cameras and addressing reporters about their "moral obligation," it wasn't clear what Trillanes and Lim wanted or were waiting for. And so, as police officers dragged them roughly through the crowd massed in front of the hotel, one couldn't help feeling a stab of sympathy for the two brave, gallant but ultimately misguided messiahs-to-be. Once again, they had put the country through the wringer, only to end up with a dud of a misadventure.

* * *

RIC Ramos, a friend of mine, wrote in to say that the weather and the season are to blame for what he calls a "failed coup." It was raining when Trillanes, Lim et al. began their march from the Makati RTC to the Pen, and while they and their companions called out to onlookers to join them, no one, it seemed was willing to follow them. "Filipinos have an aversion to getting wet especially when they are wearing nice clothes, like their office attire," observes Ramos.

The misadventure also happened to take place on the eve of a three-day holiday, and smack in the middle of the Christmas season, when people are understandably distracted by such mundane concerns as vacation logistics, shopping and bazaar hopping. "Empirical data show that the weather ... is a major factor to consider in staging a coup for change of government," says Ramos in a more sober tone. The two "People Power" successes—logistically speaking—we have had both took place in February, "when the weather is most pleasant" and most days are "cool and breezy." So what do we say to the "Five Star Rebels" as a police general dubbed them? Better timing next time?

* * *

IN A PRESS statement, Sen. Mar Roxas warned the Arroyo administration about the underlying meaning of the Peninsula incident.

"The administration should read the writing on the wall and think deeply about the roots of this incident—the issues of justice, poverty, failed institutions and the people's powerlessness," Roxas said.

"This incident almost led to bloodshed, had it not been for the decision of Senator Trillanes and company to stand down. Let them face the bar of justice, but not vengeance or unwarranted recrimination," he added.

The Black and White Movement, which falls within the ranks of anti-Arroyo groups, saw the action of the officers as a reaction to "months of indignities and shabby treatment." "Every person has their limit," the group said. "We recognize and sympathize with fellow citizens like them. Even when the thirst for justice has led citizens to submit to the system, the system leaves our country still thirsting for justice."

"The problem is not the people, it is the President. The first step is for her to resign," B&W said.

Meanwhile, the story of the standoff at the Pen moved swiftly from the put-down of a small group of military rebels to the police handling of the media who were there as witnesses to what was happening. The media have been called "wallflowers at an orgy," because the media are there merely to record and report, not to participate. But that evening, as the police rounded up the Magdalo and their supporters, the men and women of the media found themselves being handcuffed with plastic ties and marched into buses for "processing."

The media had moved from being mere wallflowers to suspected supporters and even possible conspirators.

Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno, who seemed, again, to be calling the shots during the tension-filled hours, appeared unrepentant and blamed the media for the way they were treated, saying they had been warned to leave the hotel because an assault was to take place.

But even if police generals have already apologized, the rough-handed treatment of the media and the curfew imposed soon after are harbingers of a harsher regime.

* * *

THE LIBERAL Party has in fact issued a statement strongly denouncing "the unnecessary imposition of a curfew ... and the arrogant handling of journalists who were merely engaged in the legitimate, unvarnished coverage of an event."

Giant network ABS-CBN is said to be planning to sue the government for the arrest of its reporters and crew, and I hope the entire media community joins it in this cause.

When I bumped into him Friday night, Sen. Francis Pangilinan warned that if the curfew imposition and the arrest of the media are brought to court and are found to have been unconstitutional, "then all the police generals and personnel responsible for implementing it will be held accountable." This is what the Supreme Court said in its finding on the "State of Emergency" declaration, he said, but until now, not one policeman or general or secretary has taken the fall for its illegal implementation.

Will China 'lose' the 2008 Olympics?

WORLD VIEW

Ian Bremmer

WHEN THE INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC COMmittee awarded Beijing the 2008 Summer Games in July 2001, the announcement ignited wild celebrations across the country. The Chinese Communist Party hoped to use the Games to showcase the country's emergence as a dynamic, modern nation. But as China's leaders begin final preparations for the Games next August, they may be wondering if hosting the event was such a good idea after all. They have significant reasons for doubt.

China's senior leaders always closely monitor spontaneous public expressions of nationalist fervor, fearful that shifting winds might blow an unwelcome storm in their direction. Of course what they hope is that the Games will channel these energies toward national solidarity, which will allow the leadership to deliver to its people a moment of achievement and patriotic glory.

But the Olympics will also bring intense international scrutiny of China's weaknesses at a delicate moment in the country's development. The world already knows of China's success and its attractiveness as a destination for foreign investment, but few outsiders have seen firsthand the steep price the country is paying for its new prosperity.

The most obvious signs of that cost flow through the country's waterways and contaminate its air. Runaway growth and development have left about 70 percent of China's lakes and rivers severely polluted, many unfit for human use of any kind. Indeed, nearly a half-billion Chinese lack access to clean drinking water, and the number of terminally polluted rivers and lakes grows daily.

But air quality will prove the more embarrassing problem next August. Television coverage of athletes gasping for breath will hardly provide Beijing with the signature Olympic image it has in mind, and growing international anxiety over climate change and other environmental hazards will ensure that such issues receive considerable media coverage.

There is also the risk that the Games will become a political circus, as the international spotlight generates irresistible opportunities for public protest. The Chinese leadership has demonstrated many times that it can quell domestic dissent, but the unique scale of the Olympics will require round-the-clock vigilance.

Activists with grievances over Tibet, Taiwan, Burma, Darfur and dozens of other political, environmental and human rights issues are already making plans. Is China ready for Greenpeace, Human Rights in China, Amnesty International and Falun Gong supporters taking to the streets, with thousands of foreign journalists hungry for stories and asking questions that the authorities are unaccustomed to answering?

Even if the police are able to maintain order in Beijing, can they extend that control across the country? Can they manage the flow of information and ideas through the blogosphere as online activists open yet another front in their battle for free information? What we do know is that Chinese officials have never faced a challenge of this scale, with such a potential to both win and lose face.

The Games will generate significant foreign-policy risks as well. In Taiwan, outgoing President Chen Shui-bian is stirring the independence pot, knowing that the Olympic spotlight will limit Beijing's ability to respond forcefully. He has already proposed a popular referendum on Taiwanese membership in the United Nations. China's influence within the UN would prevent such a move even if Taiwan voted yes, but an international confrontation is the last thing China wants coinciding with the Olympics.

Then there is the matter of how the Games will be received in the West. Since 2001, China has increasingly become the focal point of much anxiety in the developed world. Huge bilateral trade deficits, accusations that China keeps its currency undervalued and a rash of defective and dangerous Chinese-made exports have fueled a protectionist backlash in the United States and Europe.

Amid bitter election-year debates over Iraq and Iran, and a souring economic outlook, Americans may be in no mood for the triumphalist pageantry of a new rising power on display in Beijing. Will China's uneasy Asian neighbors be any more receptive? International criticism is sure to follow if something, anything, goes wrong during the Games, especially if it involves the suppression of dissent and is shown around the world via 24-hour cable television and the Internet.

China has changed since it "won" the 2008 Games seven years ago. The Party leadership has grown more self-assured in its growing international role, but its ability to manage the pace of change at home has become more uncertain. In 2001, then President Jiang Zemin hoped the Games would herald China's arrival as an industrialized power. But his successor, Hu Jintao, has focused on the damage that has come from unrestrained growth. He and Premier Wen Jiabao have also championed a more "harmonious" society, because they understand that the growing wealth gap, social tensions, environmental and public health problems, and the Party's tenuous relationship with China's less advantaged people can no longer be neglected.

As China's leaders scramble to address these challenges, will they still relish the idea of providing an international audience with front-row seats? How they look back on the Games once the confetti is swept from the streets is far from certain.

Project Syndicate

Ian Bremmer is president of Eurasia Group and a Senior Fellow at the World Policy Institute.

Double-barreled

REBEL WITHOUT A CLUE

Patricia Evangelista

THERE IS A REASON WHY TRADITIONAL DEMOCRATIC discourse rejects active military involvement in politics, and stresses civilian supremacy. The reason is this: that violence, or the threat of violence, which the military utilizes in the enforcement of its goals, must be without bias in its service to the public.

Without that neutrality, that presumption that public will and public institutions must be respected, the general can easily strafe a group he considers terrorist, the activist and the journalist can find themselves in a torture camp, and the man in fatigues carrying an M16 can wander down an urban zone and intimidate residents.

It is not democracy when the civilian will is not paramount—the barrel of a gun, after all, is infinitely more effective as a lobbying tool than a party pamphlet. It is that reasoning that makes the image of the tank parked beside a Christmas tree in the Manila Peninsula Hotel so jarring. It is that same reasoning that makes the Manila Peninsula standoff all the more dangerous.

Oakwood, some will argue, can be forgiven—it was the work of desperate men who had no means of making their will heard. Oakwood gave them a voice, one loud enough to push Antonio Trillanes IV into running in the elections. His running is essentially a bow to civilian supremacy, an acknowledgment that change does not come from military will, but from that most civilian of all civilian institutions—the elections. In February 2007, his statement in Genuine Opposition rallies emphasized the need for action. Many have died, he said, and many more will die in military conflicts because of rank corruption in government.

He had many issues: anti-corruption, poverty alleviation, peace and order, and education. Yet foremost of all, he said he believed in Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's guilt, and promised the public that his vote in the impeachment court would be against the President. He got his mandate, 11 million votes on a tiny campaign budget, a manifestation of public disenchantment, a protest to current realities.

Perhaps it went to his head. Because it is rank arrogance on the part of Trillanes to believe that his election as a senator presupposes public support to an armed attack on the administration. Because that is what it was—it wasn't a protest rally or a "political act" as his lawyer claims. A political act does not involve men with guns in combat gear. If they wanted to protest as civilians, they should have come as civilians. It didn't matter that they held no one individual hostage. Their presence in a high-profile public establishment as armed men was threat enough. That was why military men were banned from holding "public meetings" in impoverished urban areas during the elections—it is because simply wearing a military uniform carries with it the entire symbolic threat of an institution that enforces through violence and fear.

Whether or not former Vice President Teofisto Guingona and Bishop Julio Labayen supported the carrying of arms is still unknown. But bungled as it was, pitiful as the results were, the standoff was a situation where a handful of men believed that the end justified the means. Trillanes claimed it was his "moral obligation as a public official and ex-soldier" that led to the Manila Peninsula standoff. If every unhappy war veteran believed that, GMA would have been assassinated long ago. The difference between a man like Trillanes and a man like former Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan, dubbed the butcher of Central Luzon, is that Trillanes' cause is legitimate, and Palparan's is not. But that's a matter of personal opinion, and who's to say that Trillanes won't decide it is his moral duty to begin assassinating men he believes are corrupt officials?

Trillanes and his people argue that there are no other means, yet they themselves walked out of one of democracy's check-and-balance processes—a court proceeding. Even those who support the call for Ms Arroyo's resignation do not wander into hotels with M16s and demand change—that is the way of the terrorist, and that is the one way to ensure that a cause is delegitimized.

If the government didn't bungle its response and, therefore, inadvertently change the angle of the story, Trillanes' cause, and that of so many human rights advocates and freedom fighters, would have been compromised.

That the government overreacted is of course doubtless. Reporters in handcuffs, a sudden overnight curfew, a tank smashing into a hotel lobby—all of these were unnecessary, and to be expected only from a trigger-happy government that has little respect for civil liberties. Hauling journalists to Camp Bagong Diwa to "verify their identities" is nothing short of moronic, second only to PNP Director General Avelino Razon's bluster that they will countersue "our media friends" for obstruction of justice. If the Philippine National Police is so certain that media people monumentally obstructed justice in the performance of their duties, then Razon and his merry men can make their case before a judge. It is an accusation that shouldn't simply be used as a hammer to frighten ABS-CBN and other media institutions. It has nothing to do with cuffing media people and fingerprinting them for reasons even policemen are not certain of.

And yet—and this is the more important point— all this must not take away from the fact that Trillanes and his men must be held responsible for their crimes. A distaste of violence and violent threat is one that has to be emphasized in a country that is frequently turning apathetic to deaths and disappearances well outside legal frameworks.

It is difficult to condemn someone who condemns human rights violations, corruption and the unnecessary agonies of so many of the AFP's brave men. Yet it is a necessary condemnation, the same condemnation that must be aimed at members of the New People's Army who threaten villages in the countryside, the same condemnation against college fratmen who bludgeon initiates to death, the very same condemnation against the death squads that play both judge and executioner in Davao.

"Dissent without action is consent," says Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim, one of Trillanes' "partners." In this case, to support Trillanes' actions because of his cause is not simply dissent to GMA and what she stands for. It is also consent to violence, and that consent, in the future, may unleash hands that are not as seemingly benevolent as those of Senator Trillanes.

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Editor Juan V. Sarmiento Jr.

PHYSICIANS AND PATIENTS

Language and power relations (2)

LAST WEEK, THIS SECTION FEATURED THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELLERS and buyers—how sellers use advertising to make certain brands espouse a viewpoint and tell buyers what is right and wrong and what is desirable and undesirable. It's advertising that thinks for the consumer so that he or she will buy the product.

Today, "Talk of the Town" is featuring the relationships between physicians and patients, and employers and employees.

Juan Luis Conde, a Spanish philologist, looks into these relationships in the paper "The Grammar of Subordination: Language and Power Relations."

Conde says power relations exist when two or more people gather. The relationship may be between a parent and a child, a man and a woman, or among children and friends.

Language mediates between subordination and power, which the philologist says is an imbalance that can be obvious as in a master-slave relationship, or subtle when the subordinate is unaware of his or her position of disadvantage.

In the relationship, one of the parties imposes on the other party a particular interpretation of the world and uses it to his or her advantage.

By Juan Luis Conde

NOT ALL POWER RELATIONS ARE THE SAME. Neither are they conditioned by common objectives. Take the case of that between the physician and the patient. This is a subcategory—one of dependency. This is clearly not the case of a mere imposition of one's will over that of another. Rather, it is an exercise in attaining a common goal—the patient's well-being.

In this light, it could be viewed as a teamwork in which one of the players is equipped with the required knowledge (the powerful physician) and the other one is ailing (the vulnerable patient).

Fear of pain, illness or even death is at the root of that vulnerability. Whether we like it or not, this constitutes a power relationship, which may on some occasions be one of absolute power. The slightest show of concern by the physician during the diagnosis, a mere change in his or her facial expression, or any other form of nonverbal communication may have a chilling effect even on the toughest and healthiest of individuals.

For the doctor's influence to shine, it is imperative that accompanying circumstances are in place. Power is exercised and interpreted within a framework of rituals and ceremonies. We will not be under the same impression if we enter a tile-floored area and bump into a doctor sporting a T-shirt and Bermuda shorts, with a three-day-long beard and an earring pierced in his lobe, or if we were to be ushered into the clinic after being welcomed by a well-groomed secretary in a trendily designed waiting area.

Forms and appearances

The doctor will mostly be wearing a well-bleached shirt and a tie. More importantly, he or she is more power-conscious than the secretary. Most likely, the doctor is one of those who maintain their prestige through the image they project in a reinforcing fashion. The clinic will be presumably wallpapered with diplomas. These are his credentials even if we cannot attest to their origin, much less their authenticity. Nevertheless, one has to acknowledge the fact that it works.

Furthermore, it is expected that the doctor charge an arm and a leg for his or her services. Understandably, even if the patient dislikes the color of the tie, he or she will deposit his or her trust in the physician. All is lost by now. The patient has succumbed to the prestige of forms and appearances.

Technical lingo

One of the cornerstones of the rituals of power is very much rooted in the spoken language. Not too long ago, patients would walk into a clinic with the same attitude of respect that he or she would have when meeting a guru. And congruently, the language of the physician would be—like in the case of the guru—unreachable and uninformative. After all, the patients were perceived to be ignorant of the subject matter.

Why bother—to the physician's mind—explain something that would prove incomprehensible to the patient. If by any chance, the patient dared to ask for additional information, he or she would be buried under a load of technicalities that would not add any light altogether as it would constitute an invisible pedestal that would further elevate the stature of the physician. The technical lingo would seem to imbue the physician with greater knowledge and wisdom.

It may not be the case all the time, but believe me the names of diseases are not a product of spontaneous generation. A quick survey of European medical history would show that once an ailment had been typified, identified and associated with specific symptoms and standard manifestation, it would be named after its discoverer; e.g. Pfeiffer's fever, Creutzfeldt-Jakob's disease, and Von Recklinghausen disease.

This appears to give lineage to sicknesses, but has no bearing as far as relieving the pain is concerned. From the middle of the 20th century, things have moved toward a more mechanical, technical nomenclature, which may be traced to the process of the illness. Thus, the earlier mentioned sicknesses are now known as infectious mononucleosis, spongiform encephalopathy, and neurofibromatosis, respectively.

US influence

This turn of events is due to the increasing impact of the United States and its professional approach. The invasion of Anglo-Saxon lexicon is a more frequent occurrence in the field of medicine and its use becomes an acquired debt to the United States. It is inherently linked with the prestige of forms and the symbolic control that it commands. Anglo-Saxon-borne expressions are not particularly known for their illustrative nature.

The same may be said of the barrage of initials and acronyms currently being used. Physicians may have opted for the latter to reduce the length of the names given to diseases, but—mind you—they shed no light whatsoever for laypersons, such as you and me.

Euphemisms

Euphemisms are the most misleading lexicon phenomenon, and the medical profession has transformed this "virus" into an art form. Traditionally, societies have opted to assign Greek-and-Latin-derived expressions to socially rejected ailments. Thus, in the '50s and '60s tuberculosis was referred to as the "Fimic Process," syphilis as the "Leutic Process" and cancer as "Neoplasia." Politically correct expressions—the most recent manifestation of taboo—have likewise imposed its law.

Subsequently, recourse to technical language is the best bet to replace the language of the street, one that would make people uncomfortable or at the very least blush. The anti-baby pill was renamed oral contraceptive. In an informal conversation the condom will neither be referred to as a preservative nor a prophylactic—the tamed and acceptable coined expressions. Ergo, the current technical euphemisms. The Ob-Gyn practitioners are true masters of this. For political reasons or otherwise, we will hear them speak of "voluntary interruption of pregnancies" instead of simply saying "abortion."

Doctors may say otherwise, but today their statements are as authoritarian and obscure as they were in the past. This may be due to the fact that the stature of physicians is believed to increase in as much as it deprives the layperson the use of their vocabulary. It is also an intentional mechanism to earn the trust of the patient in an undertaking that will ultimately help the latter.

Like in the case of poetry, and attending to psychological considerations, the truth is prescribed in the guise of obscurity. In the case of patients afflicted with terminal diseases (cancer, in particular) the information criteria have changed in the course of time. Less that 10 years ago, physicians would inform the family of the patient that the latter suffered from cancer, leaving it to the family to break the news to the patient. Currently, the information is conveyed directly to the patient in concise terms.

Be clear

It would appear that physicians have become followers of the philosopher of language, Paul Grice, who said, "Be clear!" They follow his teachings to the letter. Well, not quite.

The prognosis of a terminal case will be conveyed to the patient as follows: "You are afflicted with a chronic pulmonary process that is not easy to address. We have to operate but are not sure of what we might find." A glimmer of hope is presented even if the diagnosis is pitch black. Then the physician will "shed more light" by adding, "There is an unfolding novel therapy" or "You can never tell. There are many and fast-paced researches being conducted and discoveries are made almost on a daily basis." The patient will cling to this.

At the source of this transfer in the locus of responsibility is the fact that fear and desire are the best grounding for our credibility. This may be of value in the use of hyperbolic expressions.

Take the case of the attending physician's determination to persuade the most recalcitrant patient to comply with the prescribed treatment. All the physician has to do is look into the patient's eyes and utter the following with a stern face: "Otherwise, there is a 40-percent [possibility] that this might require dialysis." Rest assured that the patient would gladly follow as told.

Translation by Chaco Molina

(Juan Luis Conde is a doctor of philosophy in Classical Philology and a professor of Latin at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid.)

ILLUSTRATION BY ANTHONY MISTADES/PAGE DESIGN BY ERNIE SAMBO

From boss to leader

LET US FOR A WHILE leave the clinic and move into the headquarters of a transnational corporation (TNC). We are in the midst of well-lit premises, open doors, defused organizational charts where a horizontal organizational structure is in place, and flexible relationships are the rule. There seems to be a pleasant work environment—people work in teams and cooperation is the operative term.

Has the democratic revolution finally taken over the corporate world? While the kind-hearted believe that the demise of the slave drivers and the humanization of the workplace are "beneficial to all," they will not deny that what is beneficial to the company remains paramount. The egalitarian on-the-side-remarks cover up the daily state of subordination.

This is neither about "powershy" CEOs nor about post-communist redemption. It is "the firm belief that this approach will be more profitable." Persuasion has replaced command. By virtue of this newspeak, the employee must feel a sense of ownership and has to be made to understand that his or her fate is tied to that of the company, in the same manner that his or her well-being depends on the outcome of electoral exercises.

The case of power relations in a modern corporate setting shows us to what extent the very perception of such relations may be modified through language techniques.

Manuals of newspeak

The source of this persuasive discourse may be found in the self-help books for executives that abound in any bookstore. They come with enticing titles such as "Get them to say Yes," "How to build efficient teams," "How to get the best out of your colleagues," "Lessons from Shakespeare," or "Beyond Machiavelli." These are the manuals of newspeak for corporate communication.

Equipped with PowerPoint presentations and a laptop, the new preachers have travelled the world to advocate the Gospel of American business and are welcomed as superstars. They are on the air and have grown to be the messiahs of good governance. They juggle management tools with highfaluting terminology, which, sooner rather than later, colonizes the political discourse. Please welcome transparency, accountability, cooperation, participation, integration, wellness and equilibrium!

A number of these words are byproducts of the intercourse between medical language and mystic touch, which offers prescription for personal development or an appeal to emotional intelligence. We cannot overemphasize the power of the language they use.

Hospital management

The otherwise powerful physicians are at the receiving end vis-à-vis the hospital management. In their capacity as medical workers, there is a verifiable lack of satisfaction among physicians. Recently, I read a management pundit describe the situation in a Spanish hospital as follows; "...our health system is affected by chronic cultural anaemia due to the lack of shared values and a collective imbalance brought about by emotional insufficiencies." This is truly a paradoxical language in which the physicians are viewed as patients and treated as such.

Wasn't it simply a case of "overworked and underpaid doctors?" Expressions such as this would make too many eyebrows rise among modern management theoreticians. It is simply uncalled for to speak about money and compensation, not to mention a deceleration in the pace of work!

Motivation

In the private sector, wage earners are expected to perform beyond what is spelled out in the contract. They are expected to acquire a moral commitment. They should neither work out of fear nor as a product of the slightest form of coercion. The carrot approach is no longer well regarded. They are expected to be guided by more edifying reasons. Not surprisingly, the most repeated word in business management manuals is "motivation." What is to be understood by motivation? To win over someone to achieve what is desired from him or her.

No wonder corporations are no longer scouting for aggressive executives but for charismatic leaders, who are expected to convey that what is good for the corporation is good for all. Even the author I quoted on the affairs of my country's health service is trapped in management newspeak. That is why the recipe that he volunteered for the malaise suffered by medical practitioners was not for them to earn more and work at a more reasonable pace, but to bring in a new set of daring leaders who could propel a trust-based culture change.

Role model

In short, the torch has been passed from one form of power to a different one, regardless of the nature of the organization. This is the magical solution of our times. In modern-day corporations, the boss has to transform himself into a leader. The explicit determination to replace the old notion with a new one—if only in nominal terms and without putting productivity in peril—is patent in the following text, which I have culled from an internal e-mail in a TNC from the transport sector.

"It is the aspiration of our company to have more leaders and role models than managers. These means working hard, but not 15 hours every day; leaders can only achieve optimal productivity by balancing work with their personal life," the e-mail said.

But aside from working hard in harmony with a healthy personal life, what are leaders and what do they do?

It goes without saying, that his power never takes the form of coercion. Leaders do not give orders; they govern. Leaders don't issue instructions; they inspire. In their newspeak, business management textbooks describe the "ideal" form of modern power. While lip service is given to gender sensitivity, the truth of the matter is that the preferred profile is one of a "dynamic, enterprising, self-motivated, articulate male, who is skilled in guiding his well-integrated and cohesive team."

Camouflage

This change in nomenclature in top management is nothing new.

To extract the best from their staff while maintaining industrial peace, corporations are increasingly requiring the direct intervention of the Human Resource Departments, a euphemistic construct because these are far more heartless and dehumanizing than their predecessor, the Personnel Departments.

Constant language change is designed to camouflage power-relations while claiming to have transformed them.

Juan Luis Conde

Official apathy adds to delay in shrine

MARAGONDON, CAVITE—PERHAPS MORE important than the issue of whether or not Andres Bonifacio looks like his monument is the apparent disregard and lack of interest of the national government and the provincial officials of Cavite to finish the Bonifacio shrine.

Artist Toym Imao, the sculptor commissioned by the National Historical Institute (NHI) to create the monument, said the project was still in its second phase three years after it started.

He admitted that the work on the site had been slowed by budget constraints. He said the repeated theft of materials to finish the artwork worsened the problem.

Lack of funds

"I just hope the whole site will be finished in time for Bonifacio's 150th birthday in 2013," Imao said.

Maragondon Mayor Monte Andaman also said they were having problems getting enough funds for the undertaking.

Jorja Angeles, licensing officer and market supervisor of Maragondon, said aside from the shrine, they also plan to put up a pavilion, two swimming pools, picnic grounds and a camping site in the area.

The construction of the pavilion started after the Department of Tourism (DOT) released P15 million. Angeles said the DOT earmarked another P24 million for the project.

Deck with 360-degree view

She said they also started to develop a viewing deck that would offer visitors a 360-degree view of Maragondon and the nearby towns of Ternate and Naic.

But first, the municipal government should do something about the roads leading to the site.

At present, only a 10-kilometer feeder road connects the Bonifacio plaza to a concrete road in Barangay Pinagsanhan B.

If visitors plan to travel from the town proper, they have to drive around adjacent Ternate town for at least 30 minutes before reaching the place.

Because of the bad roads, the municipal government was forced to hold the commemoration of the 144th birth anniversary of Bonifacio at the town plaza last Thursday.

Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon

After the Pen siege, GMA goes shopping

From page A1

Wearing a white printed blouse and dark pants, the Chief Executive made her first public appearance at the Paco flea market yesterday, two days after her government crushed a short-lived siege at the Peninsula Manila hotel in Makati City staged by Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV and Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim.

The night before she went to market, Ms Arroyo addressed the nation for the second time since the failed revolt, assuring everyone that the "situation" in the country was "calm and secure."

"The curfew has been lifted and people are going about their business as usual," she said, referring to the five-hour curfew she imposed from midnight to dawn on Friday in Metro Manila and two nearby regions to allow authorities to do follow-up operations.

Bathroom brushes

"The city, and indeed the entire nation, is functioning normally," the President said in her nationwide address aired over government television station NBN-4 on Friday night.

Ms Arroyo decided to make good her pronouncement and went shopping the next day.

A burst of applause greeted the President when she alighted from a black limousine that stopped in front of the Paco market at around 2 p.m.

Vendors, customers, media and onlookers mobbed her, as she made her way to the stalls with Trade Secretary Peter Favila, Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim and other officials trailing behind her.

Her first stop was a stall selling household cleaning items where she bought five pieces of bathroom brushes worth P10 each.

Trash cans

Next stop, tableware. The President bought P1,600 worth of plastic soup bowls and plates from a vendor.

Her last purchase were two trash cans and another set of plates for the total price of P1,500.

Making her way through the market, the President conversed with vendors, most of whom tried to sell her their wares.

"Ma'am, do you want to buy curtains?" one vendor cried out to her.

Fair and small

Others were overheard saying how fair and small the President was.

With her shopping completed, Ms Arroyo walked back to her limousine, waving and smiling at the crowd.

She spent a little over P3,000 for the household items which would probably be for the use of her household staff, Favila told reporters.

Ms Arroyo made the 30-minute trip to the market a few hours before she and a big delegation of government officials were to leave for a week-long trip to Europe.

To visit the queen

The President is going to Spain on a state visit and to London for an audience with Queen Elizabeth II.

In her address Friday night, Ms Arroyo said that Trillanes' caper on Thursday would not deter her from fulfilling her duties and obligations.

She said she was leaving for Europe "in full confidence."

Aside from meeting with government leaders there, the President said she would also meet with businessmen and investors to "promote the Philippines" and "advance our national interests."

What did Bonifacio look . . .

From page A1

P27.9-million "Bonifacio Historical Shrine and Eco-tourism Park."

"The bust does not resemble Bonifacio. I am not the only one who noticed it. Even students and members of the academe noticed it," Andaman said. "It looks more like a mestizo. It looks like (the late President) Manuel Quezon."

Mt. Buntis

The three-hectare Bonifacio shrine is located in Barangay Pinagsanhan B at the foot of Mt. Nagpatong—the "official" execution site where Bonifacio and his brother Procopio were killed by fellow revolutionaries on May 10, 1897.

History books refer to the place as Mt. Buntis while locals call it Mt. Hulog. This is also the area where the supposed remains of Bonifacio were unearthed in the 1930s by an excavation team commissioned by Quezon.

The Bonifacio shrine, chiefly funded by the national government through the National Historical Institute (NHI), was initiated in 2004 by Andaman and the town council of Maragondon.

As the nation commemorated his 144th birthday on Friday, Bonifacio's life and death continued to spark debate and controversy.

12-foot scale

Andaman has also questioned why the sculpture fell a foot short of the height indicated in the memorandum of understanding (MOA) they signed with Imao and the NHI, which commissioned the artist to lead the project.

Imao is the son of National Artist Abdulmari Asia Imao Sr. and the brother of Juan Sajid Imao, who cast the life-sized sculpture of Guyito, the INQUIRER's official mascot.

He explained that although the MOA specified "a 12-foot scale of Andres Bonifacio," it does not mean that it must be exactly 12 feet tall.

"Like in this project, Bonifacio's posture [is not a straight-up position]," he told the INQUIRER in a mobile phone interview on Thursday.

Imao said he was surprised that Andaman raised the issue several months after the soft launching on Nov. 30, 2004.

Defiant look

He insisted that despite the fact that it was a few inches short of its supposed 12-foot height, Bonifacio's statue was precise in its anthropometrics scale.

Anthropometrics deals with the measurement of the size, weight and proportions of the human body.

"This issue was already resolved. The COA (Commission on Audit) did not find any irregularity when they inspected it," he said.

Made of cast bronze, the defiant-looking Bonifacio stands with his left foot slightly leaning forward. He is barefoot, with hands tied behind his back, and clad in a long-sleeved farmer's shirt and Chinese trousers folded up to the shins. Lying on the ground beside him is his wounded brother Procopio, also made of cast bronze.

Artistic ethics

Imao said he understood why Andaman and others criticized his depiction of Bonifacio.

The problem was an issue of artistic ethics and the artist's interpretation of his work.

He said that even historians have different ideas on how the Supremo of the Katipunan looked.

"In fact, none of the monuments built in honor of Bonifacio look the same. There's no definitive look of Bonifacio," he stressed. "We do not have even a photograph of him. What we have are just lithographs."

"*Nasanay kasi tayong makita ang mukha ni Bonifacio sa sampung pisong papel at coins* (We just got used to seeing Bonifacio on P10 bills and coins)," he quipped.

MARI ON RAMOS/INQUIRER SOUTHERN LUZON

LOOKS LIKE MANUEL QUEZON? The controversial bronze statue is only in its second phase three years after its construction started at a nature park in Maragondon, Cavite, at the foot of Mt. Nagpatong (aka Mt Buntis), the execution site of the Katipunan founder and his brother Procopio.

Famous Bonifacio statues

The famous statues of Bonifacio were created by National Artist Guillermo Tolentino. One is in Caloocan, now called Monumento, another is in front of the National Post Office in Liwasang Bonifacio in Manila.

Tolentino supposedly based his work on the bone structure of Bonifacio's younger sister Espiridiona, who was still living when the monument was cast in 1933.

Also significant are Napoleon Abueva's bronze Bonifacio figure in Balintawak and its version in plaster erected in front of Vinzons Hall at the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City.

Another equally famous Bonifacio statue was made by Eduardo Castrillo which is at the Mehan Garden in Manila.

Imao said his version of Bonifacio was largely influenced by the one created by Castrillo.

He said his creation was based on a facsimile which was originally published in a Spanish-American daily printed during the period of the revolution.

Resolving the issue

Imao said he and Andaman already had initial talks on how to resolve the issue.

He said he was willing to change the face of the Bonifacio statue and make other necessary adjustments.

But the order on its alterations and the details of the change in facial appearance should come from the NHI, Imao said.

According to Ambeth Ocampo, NHI chair and INQUIRER columnist, the model to follow in the portraits and sculptures of Bonifacio is the monument by Tolentino.

"The model to follow is Tolentino's Bonifacio because he (Tolentino) has a basis for the likeness," Ocampo said in a phone interview.

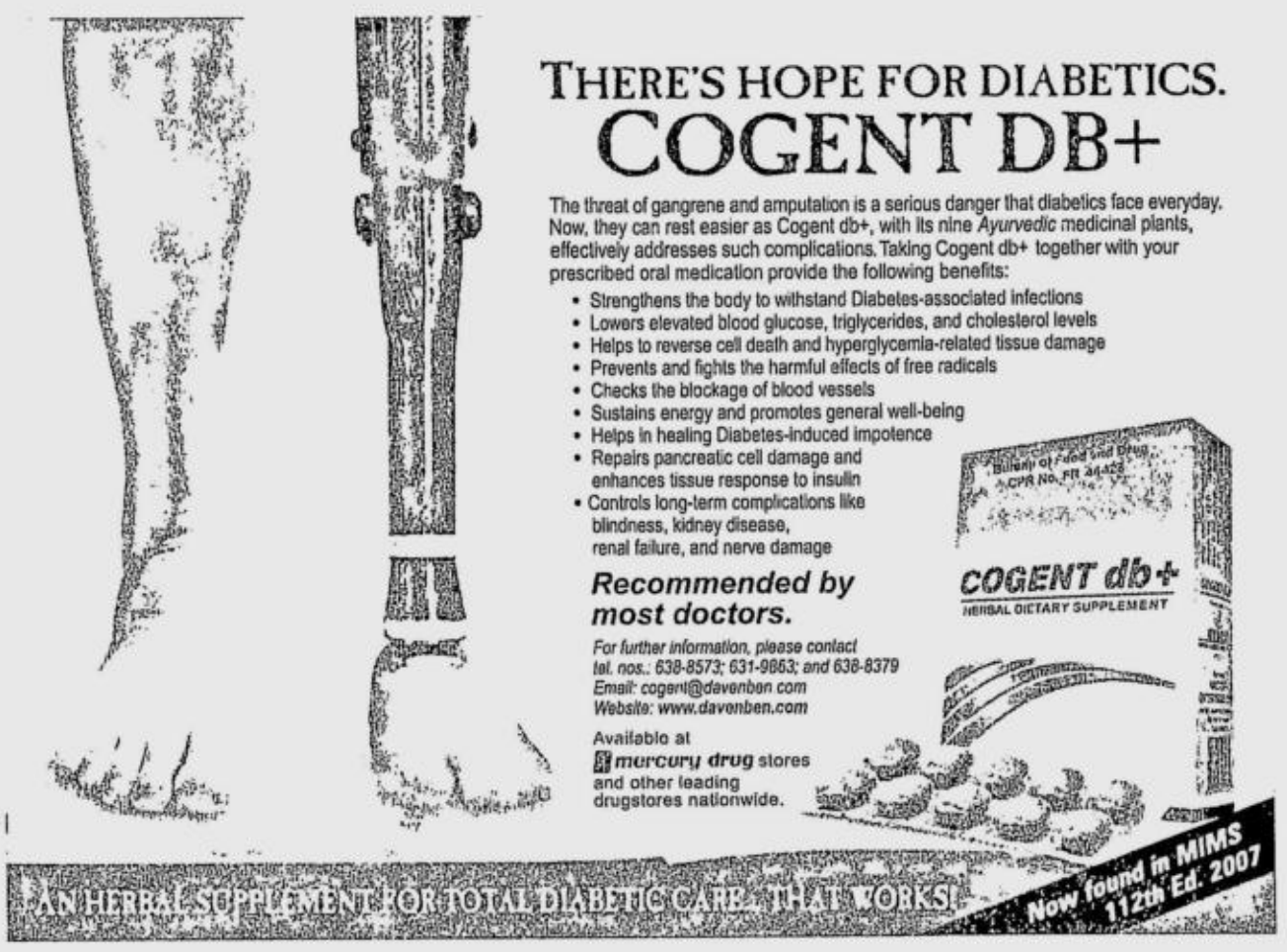
Aside from using the bone structure of Bonifacio's younger sister Espiridiona, Tolentino also consulted the only extant photograph of the hero.

The NHI chair said the studio photograph, though uncredited and already faded, was accepted by historians as the true likeness of Bonifacio.

The photo shows the hero wearing a coat and tie. Some say this was probably a picture of him during his wedding; others say the coat was "merely painted over the original photograph."

Despite their disagreements, Imao said Andaman's initiative to build the shrine was "very commendable."

With a report from Jerome Aning



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GMA plays generous host in Cebu party

Wine, buffets, gifts came from Palace funds

By Connie E. Fernandez and Cris Evert Lato

CEBU CITY—THE FOOD AND WINE WERE OVERflowing. String bands serenaded the guests. And the host did not stay more than 30 minutes, but left goodies for the guests.

President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday threw a party for the local media and their families at her official home in Cebu, the Malacañang sa Sugbo, for the first time since she assumed office in 2001.

The Internal House Affairs Office (IHAO), which is under the Office of the President (OP), pulled out all the stops in the preparations.

President's budget

Jun Mogado, director of IHAO and Socials Secretary Office, said the budget of the luncheon party came from the Office of the President.

Upon entering the Malacañang sa Sugbo, journalists were greeted by waiters carrying welcome drinks of citrus and herbs with slices of orange, lemon and a dash of mint; Sangria and Thai Ice Tea—a concoction consisting of concentrated tea with lemon grass and condensed milk.

Some 30 waiters were there to take care of the media and their families. Each journalist was asked to bring along at most four members of their families.

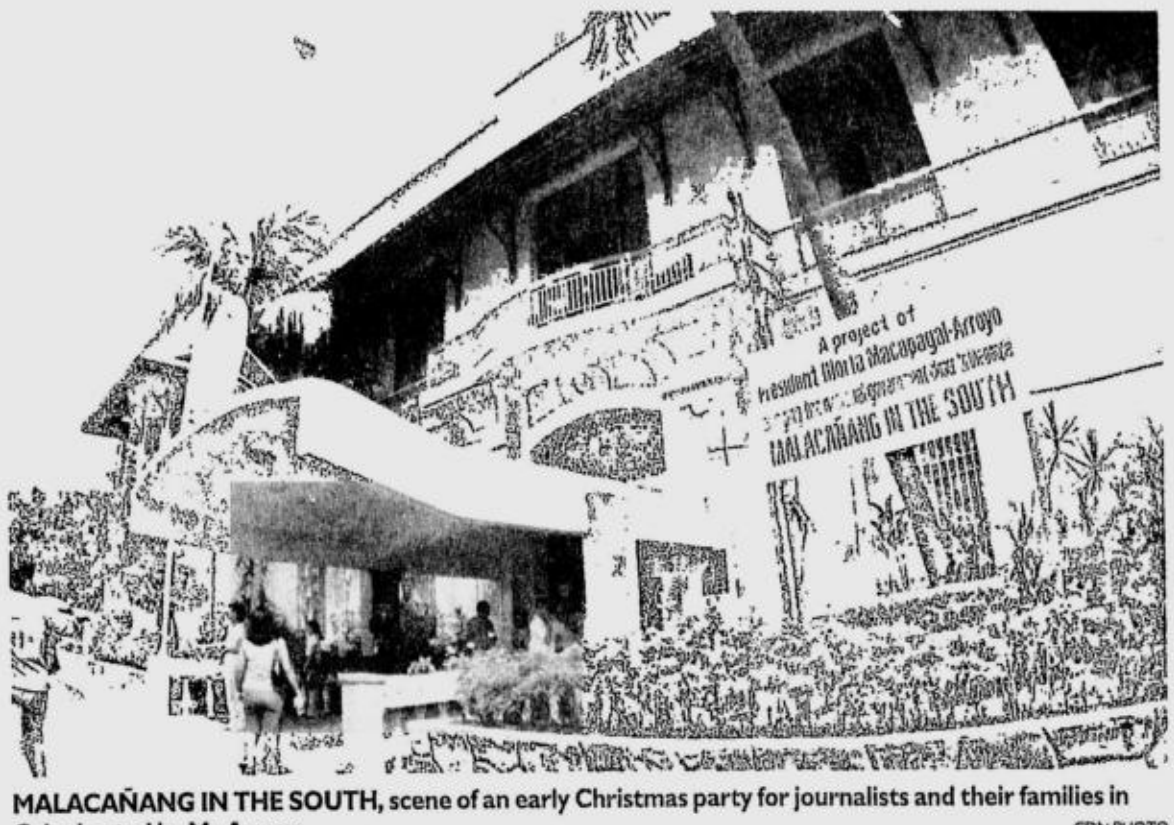
The guests also had a choice of where to sit.

Good views

If they want the view of the sea, they could sit in any of the 11 tables set up at the Bayview area. They could also sit inside the courtyard, the waiting room, the traders' lobby or the main ceremonial hall.

Each of the four areas had its own buffet table serving Mediterranean pasta, seafood curry, roasted chicken, fish patties and chicken *binakol* for soup and *pinaltok* with *suman* and fresh fruits for dessert.

Each area also had a lechon (roasted pig) station and a table for drinks, which served colas and wines—Argento chardonnay 2006 and Argento malbec 2006 (red).



MALACAÑANG IN THE SOUTH, scene of an early Christmas party for journalists and their families in Cebu hosted by Ms Arroyo. CDN PHOTO

Flowing wine

According to Mogado, they prepared 12 bottles of red wine and 12 bottles of white in case somebody would ask for wines.

But a check with the waiters showed that only three bottles of red and one bottle of white wine were opened. The guests preferred the welcome drinks and the soft drinks.

There was a band playing strings instruments in each area to serenade the guests. Anida Bagasbas, who acted as manager of the bands, said they were contracted to play for two hours for a talent fee of P22,000.

According to Julita Urbina, owner of the Cafe Laguna that catered the lunch, they prepared for 800 guests although only about 300 journalists from both the broadcast and print media came. The menu was selected by her son Raki, a chef.

"They (IHAO) are already our *suki* (regular customer)," she said. They were told that it was supposed to be for cocktails but the affair was later upgraded to sit down lunch because the President would be delayed a little bit.

Indeed, the host was a little late.

The guests started arriving at about 11 a.m. They were served with sandwiches and drinks while waiting for the President to arrive.

President's entourage

Arroyo arrived at 12:30 p.m. with Secretary Cerge Remonde, Director General of the Presidential Management Staff, Cebu Gov. Gwen Garcia and Mayor Gerry Pelayo of Candaba, Pampanga. They came from the 17th General Assembly of the League of Municipalities of the Philippines, held at the Cebu Waterfront Hotel, where the President delivered a speech.

Looking relaxed in a peach casual two-piece suit, she went from one table to another, shaking the hands and greeting her guests.

Tight security

Sources said the President was irritated when her close in security kept on tailing her. They said Ms Arroyo wanted to roam and meet the local media up close and personal but two to three PSG guards kept on walking behind her.

Sources said she also wanted to get her own food from the buffet table without being tailed by her guards. But apparently, this was not possible if you were the President of the country.

"The President wanted to talk directly to the reporters, ask them if they had problems. But her security escorts kept on tailing her," a source said.

But Ms Arroyo did not stay long.

After about 30 minutes, she left because she had to fly to Naga City in Bicol to check on the devastation brought by Typhoons "Lando" and "Mina."

She, however, asked Mayor Pelayo to stay behind.

Gift baskets

Pelayo told the INQUIRER that he donated two TV sets to be raffled off during the party "*para magiging masaya*."

He said he had asked someone to buy the TV sets, which costs about P3,500 each before he went to the party. "*Mura lang yan*. Made in China," he said.

After the raffle, the guests were each given a basket for Christmas that contained canned ham, queso de bola, ingredients for fruit salad and macaroni salad, a canister of imported potato snack food and big bottle of coffee and creamer.

One reporter, however, could not help but say in jest: "Let's look inside. Maybe the P500,000 was there." She was apparently referring to the paper bags which contained P500,000 that were given to local officials during a meeting in Malacañang Palace on Oct. 11 which was now subject of a Senate inquiry.

More parties

This would not be the first time that the President would hold a party for community media practitioners, according to a source that spoke on condition of anonymity as the official was not of liberty to speak about the event.

The official said Arroyo planned to hold a Christmas party for members of the media in other provinces. It just so happened that the kick-off was in Cebu because Arroyo had an engagement here, the same official said.

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CEBU PACIFIC
It's time everyone flies.

TEMPERATURES dropped to 11 degrees Celsius and 10 degrees Celsius in some parts of the summer capital, which was the best time to launch Christmas in Baguio. Public school children from various communities dressed up as gifts, reindeers, or miniature Santas on Saturday for an annual parade that tries to usher in a Yuletide spirit.

VINCENT CABREZA/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

Temperature drop signals start of Baguio holidays

BAGUIO CITY—CHRISTMAS HAS BEGUN in the summer capital.

Temperature in the city dropped to 10.4 degrees Celsius on Saturday dawn, hours before schoolchildren marched downtown dressed as angels, elves, reindeers, Santa Clauses and Christmas gifts to mark the start of the Yuletide.

Start of the holidays

The city receives its peak volume of tourists between December and February each year, when temperatures drop, according to Mayor Reinaldo Bautista Jr.

Salvador Olinares, a weather observer of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) here, said residents and tourists started feeling the cold weather when temperature in the city dropped to 11.6 degrees Celsius on Friday.

Strong rains fell here last week in the aftermath of two typhoons as well as the threat of a third typhoon but Olinares said the typhoons were not responsible for the nippy weather.

Normal weather

"This is normal Baguio weather at this time of the year. We expect that temperatures will [drop] some more towards January," he said.

Households atop hills in Baguio registered 9.8 to 10 degrees Celsius on their thermometers on Thursday dawn, although Olinares said the temperature range on Saturday was actually between 10.4 degrees Celsius and 19 degrees Celsius.

Narciso Padilla, founder and coordinator of the city's Silahis ng Pasko celebration, said the cold "was perfectly timed."

Sleep disturbance

Children who participated in this year's parade had to be forced out of bed because "they were perfectly tucked in bed against the freezing cold," according to their parents.

Some of the children representing barangay daycare centers gave up their prepared costumes in favor of uniform sweaters, head caps, knitted gloves and scarves.

A social worker said they prepared a set of costumes fit for warm weather because last week's humidity kept Baguio a bit warmer.

The cold weather, the city's top tourist drawer, also answered questions raised this week by tourism officials in a regional conference about Baguio's fate as a tourism destination. *Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

Trillanes mutiny interrupts GMA Laguna trip

SAN PABLO CITY—PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo declared before hundreds of participants of the Local Peace and Security Assembly (LPSA) held here on Thursday that "political killings" were not her policy.

She said her administration was keen on protecting human rights.

The President, in her speech, was responding favorably to the resolution or action plans presented to her by the assembly (LPSA) for a broad and multisectoral campaign for peace and security which, she added, is pro-human rights, pro-justice and pro-development.

Not Burma

Arroyo told the assembly that the government was winning in the campaign against the insurgency in Quezon and other provinces because of the soft and hard approaches in dealing with the rebellion.

She said unlike the dictatorial regime of Burma (Myanmar), her government is adopting the policy of "widespread amnesty" to promote lasting peace, resolve criminalities and attain social justice and human rights.

Arroyo admitted that, while there are reports of abuses among scalawags in the military and police, she believed that about 99 percent of them are respectful and willing to protect human rights.

Showcase

The President said peace and security in the Calabarzon, and throughout the country, is vital for continued economic growth and development.

"Calabarzon in the Philippines is the counterpart of the First World Economy, where economic progress and development are very evident."

Ms Arroyo expressed her support and encouragement for the San Pablo-based Franklin Baker Company of the Philippines which was reported to have plans of ending its operation here and transferring to Mindanao but with plans of putting up services-oriented commercial businesses in the same location.

Interrupted

Immediately after her speech, the President proceeded to Franklin Baker but her earlier plans to make a tour at the Baker Company was interrupted and cut short because of the reported renewed protest march staged by Sen. Antonio Trillanes and supporters against the government.

Franklin Baker employees, who were preparing to welcome the President, were frustrated as they were not able to personally witness her tour.

They said Ms Arroyo just dropped by for few minutes at the entrance gate and quickly boarded her car to proceed to Malacañang.

The President, the Cabinet members, the Presidential Security Group and military officials also quickly sped toward Malacañang. *Romulo Ponte, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Docs launch project to make AIDS info simpler

BAGUIO CITY—DOCTORS here have initiated a project to "laymanize," or put into a more accessible format, all the literature on sexuality and sexually transmitted diseases to benefit the city's grade school students.

The project, which will involve the production of a manual, was discussed during the second Baguio AIDS conference, which was attended by bar and nightclub operators and entertainers.

Teaching failure

Dr. Marie Apolinar, a member of the Baguio Benguet Medical Society and the Philippine Academy of Family Physicians, said the project acknowledges that government educators have failed to make young Filipinos understand the complexity of the HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) and AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome) crisis.

She said the high rate of premarital sex among teenagers should be accepted as a failure of the school system. This, she said, compelled Baguio doctors to consider drafting a better sexuality manual for them.

Unlike teenagers of the 1980s and the 1990s, teenagers now take the crisis for granted, Apolinar said.

Taboo

The problem may lie in how teachers try to avoid controversy, she said.

Some teachers introduce AIDS as a disease, but they do not contextualize that subject with a discussion about sexual relationships or sexual activity, Apolinar said.

"Maybe that is why teenagers still engage in sex this early. They can't grasp the risks," she said.

Apolinar and Dr. Julio Alcala have offered to translate textbooks, manuals and crisis management pamphlets into a course manual that is child-friendly.

Approach shift

The city government is hosting an Internet hotline for troubled teenagers called "Bonjing," which was launched in 2004 initially as an online moderator for teens who have questions about sexuality and relationships.

Government doctors who attended the AIDS conference panel said they have also shifted their approach to the management of the local entertainment industry by focusing on motivational courses.

Conference participants were given values appreciation seminars.

But Dr. Cecilia Brillantes, chief of the city's social hygiene clinic, said their intention was not to address the HIV-AIDS issue using religion, but to strengthen the value core of people operating and working in local bars and nightclubs.

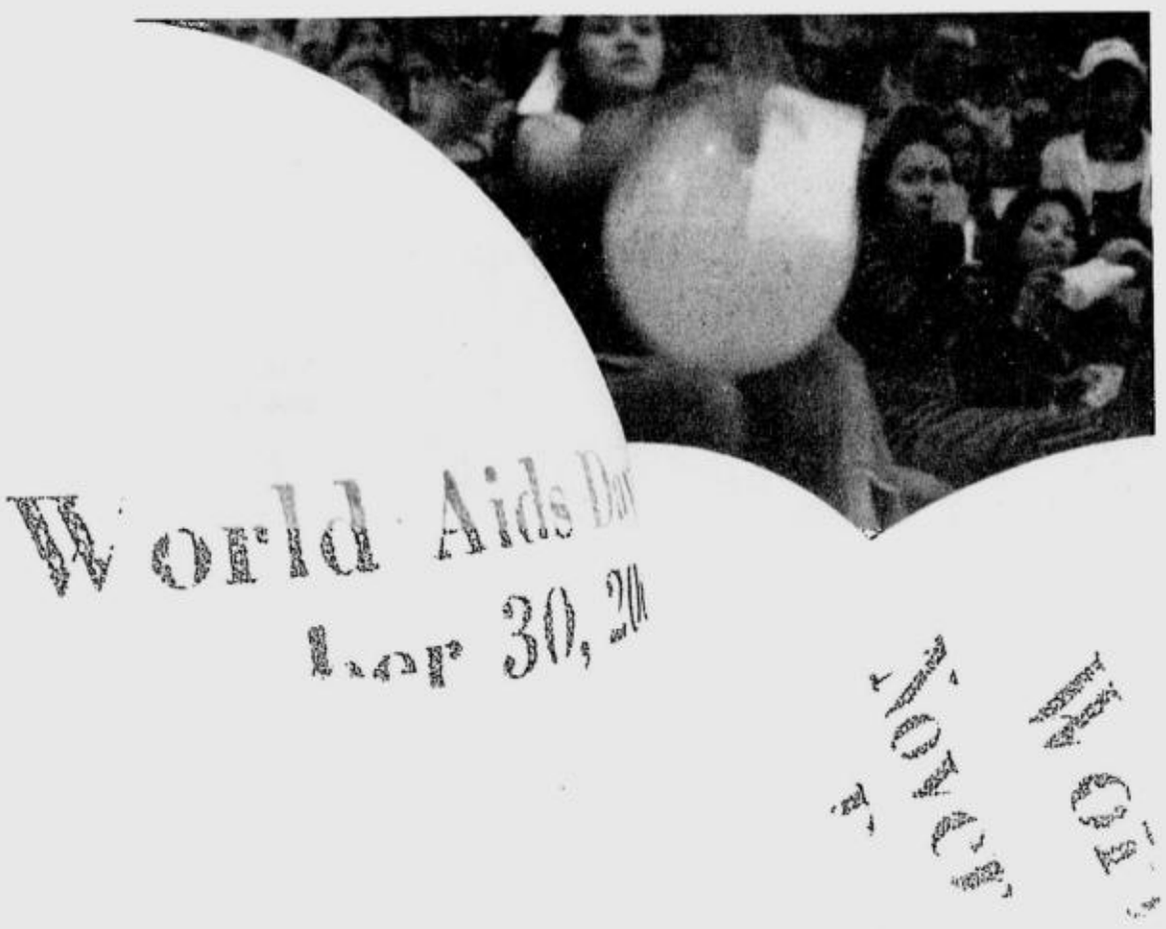
A Nueva Ecija-based civic group offered entertainers and employees of nightclubs and bars home-based projects they could develop into backyard livelihood projects.

'Magsaysay Girls'

Former Councilor Lilia Yaranon said the city government once offered livelihood to freelance sex workers, known here as the "Magsaysay Girls," because they often get clients along this Baguio street.

But the project failed because all but four of these women felt they earned more by sticking to prostitution, Yaranon said.

The old city project also bound the women to an agreement that they would stop soliciting clients, if they agree to undergo the city-subsidized livelihood programs, she said. *Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon*



BAGUIO'S night entertainers trooped to an AIDS convention on Friday, the eve of World's AIDS Day, to exchange information about the sexual disease and to get fresh supplies of free condoms.
VINCENT CABREZA/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

Pact with MILF seen start, not guarantee of peace in Mindanao

DAVAO CITY—Peace advocates and a ranking military official in Mindanao said the projected pact between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) will not automatically ensure peace in the island's troubled areas.

Government and rebel peace negotiators have projected that the final peace agreement might be signed next year after the issue on territory, viewed as the stickiest of the issues hounding the peace process, had been resolved.

"I doubt that peace will come if ever a peace agreement is signed because another group might surface to sow unpeace in Mindanao (again)," Brig. Gen. Antonio Amodia, deputy chief of the Army's 10th Infantry Division based here, told reporters.

Amodia cited as example the 1996 final agreement with the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF).

Despite the agreement, skirmishes regularly occur between soldiers and MNLF combatants in some parts of Mindanao.

"That signing is not a guarantee to attain real peace in Mindanao," Amodia said.

Peace advocates present during the news forum agreed with the general's prediction.

Pastor Mariano Apilado, of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, said this was because the peace process had always been exclusive to influential people and disregarded the participation of the main stakeholders—the majority of the people.

However, Apilado said the peace agreement, if signed, could be a significant step toward real peace.

Aleem Mahmod Adilao, of the Ulama League of the Philippines-Mindanao, said poverty should be addressed to be able to attain real peace in Mindanao. *Judy Quiros, Inquirer Mindanao*

MUSLIMS who relocated to Baguio from Mindanao to escape the decades-old violence there find themselves confronting the same images they thought they have fled, like the graffiti this sidewalk trader tries to ignore.
VINCENT CABREZA/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

Firms urged to install cameras vs terror

KIDAPAWAN CITY—NORTH Cotabato Vice Gov. Emmanuel Piñol has recommended an ordinance that would make it compulsory for business establishments in the province to install security cameras.

In a prepared statement addressed to the provincial board, which he chairs, Piñol said the installation of surveillance cameras would help prevent terror attacks in the province.

On Nov. 22, one person was killed while seven others were wounded when an improvised explosive device went off at the baggage counter of KMCC Mall along Dayao Street here.

Signature

The explosion, like that of previous attacks—including the Oct. 5 bombings here—was blamed on an extortion gang said to be allied with the Abu Sayyaf.

"We have to be more aggressive in our efforts to counter the activities of terror and extortion groups who have been doing bombing runs in the province," Piñol said in his appeal.

He said the ordinance will make it mandatory for business establishments to install camera monitoring systems.

"No business permits should be issued unless they comply," Piñol said.

Small price to pay

He acknowledged that the proposal would entail additional expenses on the part of businessmen, but he said it is a small price to pay against terrorism.

The two suspects arrested and charged in connection with the mall blast here have maintained their innocence.

Alex Takukan Sanduyugan, 20, of Rajahmuda in Pikit, North Cotabato and Hassan Mohaliad Sulaik, 19, also accused the police of planting evidence to pin them down.

"We did not bomb the mall. We are innocent," Sulaik said.

Sulaik, a resident of Barangay Nuangan, said he brought Sanduyugan to the KMCC Mall along Dayao Street here to introduce him to his fiancée, who works at the establishment.

No flight

He said if they were guilty, they could have fled immediately after the blast.

Sulaik told radio station dxND that he and Sanduyugan even peacefully went with police officers when they were invited for questioning on Thursday evening.

But Chief Insp. Leo Ajero, city police chief, said the suspects were positively identified by witnesses as the alleged owners of the baggage that contained the bomb inside the KMCC baggage counter.

He said the motorcycle that was recovered from the suspects was also in the watch list of the military-led Task Force North Cotabato as one of the vehicles supposed to be used for bomb attacks in Central Mindanao.

Raid

Ajero also cited the recovery of explosive materials from Hassan's house during Friday's raid conducted by military and police operatives.

"Based on the investigation of our men on the ground, the two are connected with the Alkobar extortion group," Maj. Rodrigo Sosmeña, spokesperson of the Eastern Mindanao Command based in Davao City, said.

The Alkobar Gang is being blamed for the series of attacks on bus companies plying central and southern Mindanao, which killed more than a dozen people this year alone.

North Cotabato Gov. Jesus Sacdalan said he was satisfied with the way the investigation was being conducted.

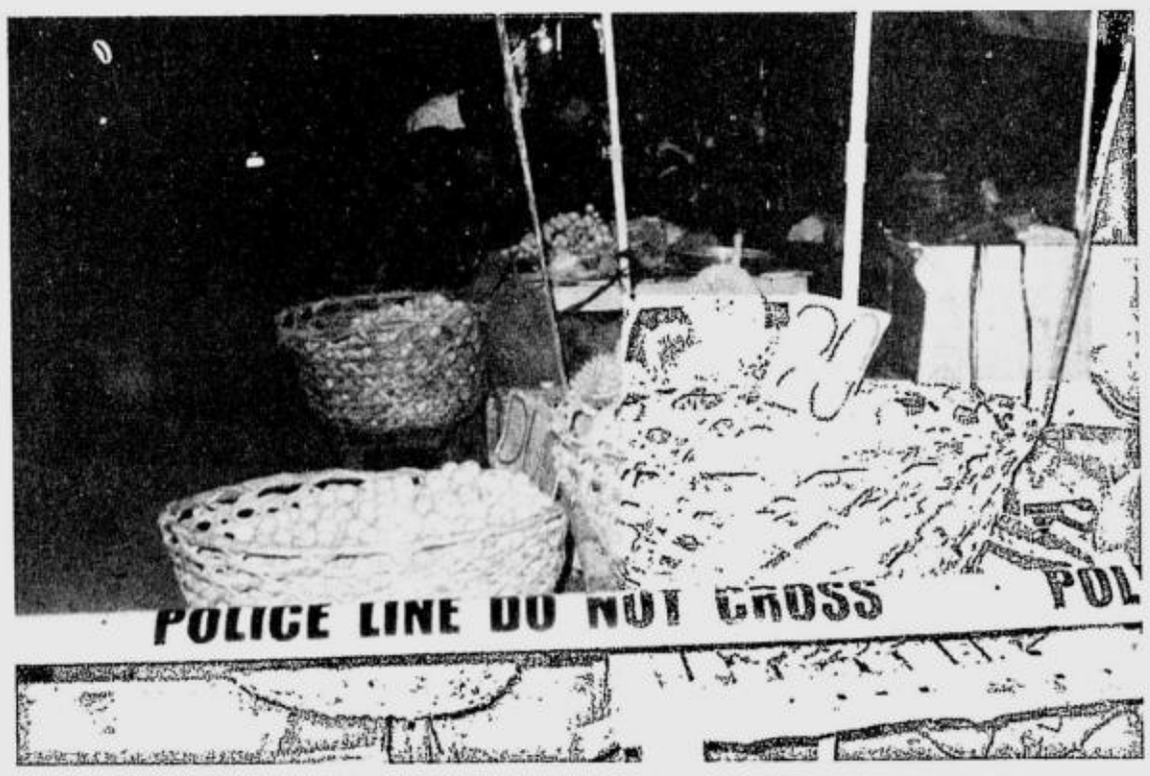
"I'm satisfied with the investigation. The possibility of a mistaken identity to happen is remote because we have witnesses," he said in reaction to queries about the credibility of the investigation.

Wrong arrest

On Jan. 25, Seres Mariano, a farmer from Carmen, North Cotabato, was arrested on suspicion of being Commander Kule Mamagong.

Mamagong, an alleged commander of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), was being blamed for the series of attacks in Central Mindanao that started in 2006.

Mariano denied he was Mamagong. This was backed by his neighbors in Barangay Cadiis in Carmen. *Jeoffrey Maitem with a report from Charlie C. Señase, Inquirer Mindanao*



SITE OF the latest bombing in Kidapawan City on Nov. 22.
ORLANDO DINOY/INQUIRER MINDANAO

Lumad families flee as troops hunt down NPAs

SAN FRANCISCO, AGUSAN del Sur—At least 215 lumad families fled their homes in Lianga and Hinatuan towns in Surigao del Sur since Nov. 1 as soldiers poured in for offensives against communist rebels.

Classes in seven lumad literacy facilities and high schools were also disrupted when soldiers rounded up teachers, students and schoolchildren and asked them if they were supporters of the New People's Army (NPA), according to Rev. Modesto Villasanta, chair of Karapatan in Surigao del Sur.

Villasanta said the military presence has disrupted classes of at least 500 schoolchildren, 177 high school students and 27 teachers.

Villasanta said the soldiers also started to occupy the houses of fleeing civilians.

Col. Jose Vizcarra, commander of the 401st Brigade based in Surigao del Sur, admitted the ongoing military operation in the province.

He said another operation was launched on Wednesday after NPA rebels ambushed a group of soldiers delivering medicines to a remote village of Lianga.

But Vizcarra said contrary to Karapatan's claim, the soldiers did not interrogate students and teachers in the affected villages.

"We were not even allowed inside the schools," he told the INQUIRER. *Chris V. Panganiban with reports from Joselle dR. Badilla, Inquirer Mindanao*

INQUIRER Mindanao

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BAGUIO children light candles for Ranario.

ELMER KRISTIAN DALIGDIG/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

Family of doomed OFW clings to hope

By Germelina Lacorte
Tubod, Surigao del Norte

"SHE LEFT THE COUNTRY BECAUSE SHE WANTED TO help the family," Susan Ranario, sister-in-law of overseas Filipino worker (OFW) Marilou Ranario, had said in October. "But now, she's the one who desperately needs help."

Ranario's job abroad would have given the family a glimmer of hope after they were evicted from a piece of land that her father used to till in Tubod, Surigao del Norte.

But the prospect of a stable income that had lured the 34-year-old woman to leave behind her two children—Raffy John, 13, and Russell, 11—in 2003 suddenly turned into a nightmare when the Kuwaiti Supreme Court sentenced her to die on Nov. 27 for killing her employer in January 2005.

BAGUIO activists wear nooses and head masks cut from garbage bags to portray the fate of OFWs like Ranario.

VINCENT CABREZA JR.

Ranario's case has given a gloomy face to the millions of OFWs who leave every year for jobs abroad.

The nongovernment group Migrante International finds it ironic that the OFWs, who help prop up the country's economy by bringing in about $12 billion in remittances each year, are dying from all forms of abuses and receive meager help from the government.

"They're more of a victim than a criminal," Migrante said. It revealed that 35 other OFWs all over the world were on death row.

Ranario's father Rosario, 64, now says that working abroad wasn't worth it at all. His family is now in a much tighter fix than before, he said.

Tubod, a small farming town of slightly over 10,000 in Surigao del Norte, does not promise much in terms of livelihood, prompting Ranario and some other residents to seek work abroad.

The Ranarios were forced to vacate their old house after their ownership claim over the property was questioned in court. Rosario and his wife Encarnacion have moved into the house of their son and daughter-in-law in another part of Barangay San Isidro.

Rosario tills a borrowed farmlot and plants rice and other crops.

"After she (Marilou) left, we've always put the two children on top of our priorities," he said. "But after what happened, her case has assumed utmost urgency; and she has become the priority."

Ranario had been able to send money for her children only twice since she left for Kuwait in December 2003. A sister, who has a teacher's diploma, had also given some money twice.

Even the $100-scholarship assistance from the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (Owwa) was never enough for the children's school expenses.

Raffy John is topping his class in Grade 6 and wants to tell his mother about it. His sister wrote that she envied her classmates because they have their mothers with them. "I only have Nanay and Tatay," she wrote, referring to her grandparents.

"They need a mother. We are too old to take care of them," Rosario said.

The family had appealed to President Macapagal-Arroyo for help. When they learned what had happened to their mother, the children wrote a letter to her.

Rosario said that two months before her daughter's employer was killed, she had called up to say that she wanted to go home to the Philippines. But her employer, she had said, would not give her back her passport.

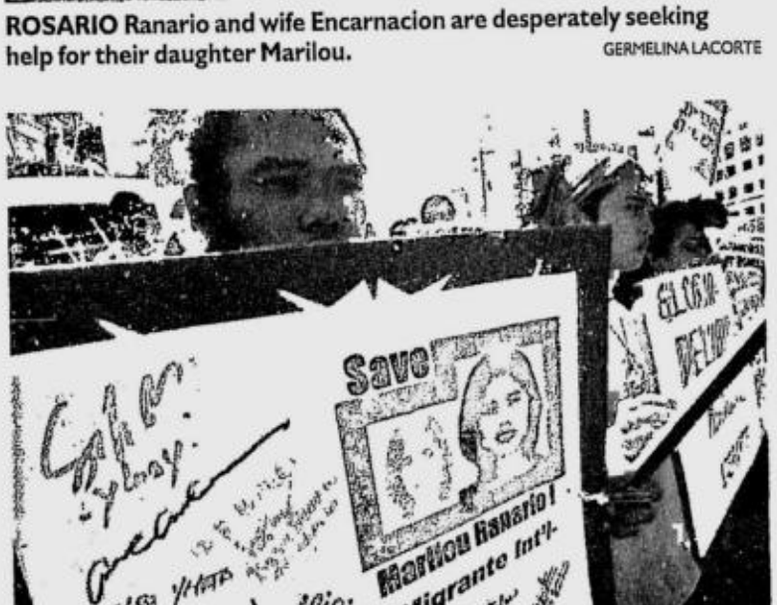
"I told her, 'It's up to you to decide,'" he said.

The next time he heard from her, she was already in trouble.

Hassan Jumdain, Owwa regional director, noted the increasing number of OFWs from Caraga, which covers five provinces, six cities, 66 towns and 1,316 barangays. As of September, they already numbered 31,331, he said.

ROSARIO Ranario and wife Encarnacion are desperately seeking help for their daughter Marilou.

GERMELINA LACORTE



A MIGRANTE member carries a placard at Welcome rotonda to appeal for help for Ranario from death in Kuwait.

ERIK ARAZAS

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'Reming' survivors recall dead kin, move on

LEGAZPI CITY—CANDLES were lit and church bells were rang simultaneously in Albay province as people remembered their departed loved ones on Nov. 30, a year after the tragedy caused by Supertyphoon "Reming" that killed more than a thousand people.

In his homily during a Mass at the Albay Capitol, Msgr. Ramon Tronqued stressed the importance of remembering not only the victims of Reming and what the typhoon had caused them.

Tronqued, parish priest of St. John the Baptist Church in Tabaco City, said those who have made a difference in the people's lives should be remembered just as well.

The Mass was attended by provincial government officials and employees.

"The persons responsible for why we are here, or who we are now and what we are now," he said, referring to the thousands of people who shared so much concern and solidarity after the typhoon.

"And because of that, we knew that we were not alone and we would survive. Because of them, we saw the light at the end of the tunnel," he said.

He asked the people not to forget all those who helped as life was almost back to normal in Albay.

"The best way of not forgetting is by being witnesses and continuing to do the good deeds of others," he said, adding that this was the best way of remembering and saying thank you.

The prayer, Oratio Imperata for Deliverance from Calamities was also read by Cedric Daep, head of the Albay Public Safety and Emergency Management Office (Apsemo).

The prayer, which has been recited since Oct. 28 in all the churches in the Legazpi Diocese, was said to have helped in the change of direction of typhoon "Mina," which was expected to hit the Bicol region last Nov. 24.

EDISON Gaufo picks up clothes his wife had laid out on the ground to dry in Barangay Padang, Legazpi City in this photo taken last year. He carries his daughter Fiona, 3, as she cries whenever they are separated. His older daughter, Michaela Kyle, 4, was swept away by rampaging waters and big boulders at the height of typhoon "Reming" in 2006. He recovered his daughter, dead, a day after. INQUIRER PHOTO

Padang

In Barangay Padang in Legazpi City, Shaina Ferrer silently sat near a grotto at the lahar site here as she lighted a candle and uttered a silent prayer.

This was the 6-year-old girl's way of remembering her grandparents and 2-year-old cousin who were swept away by torrents of lahar at the height of Reming.

The whole neighborhood in this small community of survivors amid a rocky wasteland also marked a day of remembrance.

Padang is one of the villages in the southeast quadrant of Mayon volcano, where the crater rim is lowest and much volcanic debris had been deposited in the past eruptions.

It became a pathway of the lahar when floodwaters overflowed from the original gullies that flushed out water to the Albay Gulf.

Ten households heard Mass in a nipa hut that they had built for the occasion.

The families specially prepared food that they shared with one another.

Isidro Santander Jr., a village councilor, said his two children and wife died in the tragedy.

He said they did not want to remember the tragedy but only how they lived happily as one family before the typhoon wrought havoc to their lives.

Now, Santander lives with his two other children who survived.

Moving on

Fr. Rommel Antiquera, of the St. Vincent Ferrer Parish in the neighboring village of Bigaa, said some of the about 70 people who attended the Mass came from the hilly resettlement site in Barangay Taysan.

"We must spend time loving our families for we never know when they will be gone," the priest said.

Felizardo Arienda, 35, said most of them had already moved on and accepted the tragedy that struck their village.

In Daraga town, lighted candles, orchids and makeshift markers adorned the deserted spot where a home used to stand only a year ago in Barangay Busay.

Friends and relatives quietly paid their respects to Daisy Llaguno and her family who were among the many chilling casualties of Reming in the village.

Daisy, her four children, and seven others were trapped inside their house when volcanic rocks and debris coming from the slopes of the Mayon volcano were triggered by the typhoon, causing a deadly mudflow.

The two-story house was completely washed out. Half of the house was recovered in neighboring Barangay Binitayan in the aftermath.

Only two bodies were recovered of the 12 that took shelter in the house: that of the family maid, and in her arms, the third Llaguno child, April.

They are survived by the family patriarch, Ariel Llaguno, who was abroad when the tragedy struck his family.

'Sorry'

As early as 9 a.m. Friday, Daisy's eldest sister and neighbor, Norma Montero, 45, was already lighting candles and keeping a personal vigil on the spot.

She was joined by three of Daisy's co-teachers and friends from the Pag-asa National High School in nearby Legazpi City.

Being neighbors, Norma and Daisy were close sisters, with the former being the eldest and the latter being the second child.

Norma recalled how kind and dedicated 'Dais' was to her children, saying "she wouldn't have left them behind."

"All I can offer now are prayers and these flowers because Dais liked plants," Norma said, motioning to the two pots of orchids near her feet.

She said she wanted Daisy to know that she loved and missed her.

"I would also like to say sorry to her for not being able to recover all of their bodies," she said.

Loss

Dariel, or "Din-din," the eldest of the Llaguno children, would have been a graduating student today at the Philippine Science High School in Camarines Sur.

Her friends and classmates also visited Busay Friday morning, holding a memorial on the spot where Din-din once lived.

They lit candles and put up a tiny flag using barbecue sticks and an empty shampoo sachet.

Norma said that Ariel had once again returned home from Qatar Thursday.

In honor of his wife and children, he attended the memorial Mass held Friday morning in neighboring Barangay Pandan, where most of the Busay residents have been relocated.

"He has accepted the loss and is doing fine," Norma said of her brother-in-law.

A Mass was also held Thursday in Legazpi City by the faculty and students of the Pag-asa National High School, where peace for Daisy and her family was prayed for, said Nannette Llaguno, 37, Daisy's co-teacher and sister-in-law.

"We simply have to move on, otherwise, the agony of losing loved ones will crush us," Norma said.

In Guinobatan town, about a hundred Reming survivors, all wearing white shirts, gathered at the Our Lady of Assumption Parish Church to attend a Holy Mass celebrated by Fr. Dave Ramoso.

At least 41 colored photos mostly taken in the town during and after Reming are also displayed in a photo exhibit entitled "Reming's shadow remains" at the Social Hall of the town from Nov. 30 to Dec. 9.

Joanna P. Los Baños, Ephraim Aguilar, Jaymee T. Gamil, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Marinduque coco industry yet to recover

BOAC, MARINDUQUE—A year after Marinduque was devastated by Supertyphoon "Reming" on Nov. 30, 2006, the province's coconut industry has yet to recover.

Teofila Ferrer Lingon, officer in charge of the Philippine Coconut Authority in Marinduque, said that of the 35,448 hectares of coconut plantations in the province, only less than 25 percent had harvestable trees as of the end of November.

She also said nothing more could be expected for December.

In peso value, the harvest of coconut for 2007 would amount to only P11 million, which is a far cry from the annual average of almost P320 million income on the basis of eight harvests per year.

Lingon said the low production was caused by the fact that typhoon-damaged coconut trees usually takes at least one year to recover and coconut farmers were able to harvest only once this year.

Coconut harvests started only in September.

The damage brought about by Reming in 2006 was estimated at P43 million, equivalent to almost 3,300 metric tons of coconut.

Lingon was, however, thankful despite the low production because the province's coconut trees were spared from the infestation of *Brontispa longissima* or coconut leaf beetle that is now plaguing other coconut-producing provinces.

"The production could have been worse if our coconut trees were likewise infested by the brontispa," she said.

The local PCA office, however, is monitoring this pest as there were reported beetle infestations in Barangay Malibago in the municipality of Torrijos.

Lingon was quick to clarify, however, that the report was a false alarm because upon inspection, they found out that the bugs were not of the brontispa type but Asiatic palm weevils, while other trees were infested by coconut bud rot, a type of coconut tree disease.

She was also dismayed by the negative attitude and reluctance of local coconut farmers on intercropping, which could have provided them additional income while the coconut trees are recovering.

"It is sad to note that the coconut farmers of Marinduque are not keen on intercropping for lack of initiative and interest while some are ningas-cogon," said Lingon.

Ningas-cogon is a trait in which a person starts doing something but fail to finish it.

The PCA has been advocating intercropping between coconut trees to help coconut farmers augment their income.

Coconut farming is the primary industry of Marinduque with about 19,000 farmers dependent on it. *Gerald Gene R. Querubin, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

NEWSBRIEFS

Governor stops quarrying

OROQUIETA CITY—Misamis Occidental Gov. Loreto Leo Ocampos has stopped quarrying at the mouth of Aloran River in Aloran town.

Ocampos issued the order last week upon recommendation of a team from the provincial government, which was sent to validate claims of residents about the destruction of the river banks in Barangay Lobogon because of quarrying there.

The team had confirmed the alarming condition of the river and the worsening siltation because of the quarry.

Ryan Rosauro, Inquirer Mindanao

Kidnap group frees driver

TUBOD, Lanao del Norte—A kidnap group, which is being blamed for the series of abduction of locals in the province, has freed the van driver they abducted on Nov. 25.

Gov. Mohammad Khalid Dimaporo on Nov. 30 said Kenneth Famor, 27, was released on Sunday after an intense negotiation with the kidnappers. Famor of Lala town, was driving his van to Iligan City from Kauswagan town when four male passengers declared a robbery.

After divesting the passengers of their valuables, the armed men took Famor with them. They later demanded P2 million in ransom money. Dimaporo said no ransom was paid for Famor's freedom.

Richel Umel, Inquirer Mindanao

Support rains on Sumilao farmers' walk for justice in Luzon

LOS BAÑOS, LAGUNA—Canned goods, blankets, fruits, and even a rooster named "Mr. Kaliluhan," a Higaonon word for "*galisin*" (prone to scabies), were the expressions of support that the 55 farmers from Sumilao, Bukidnon received from the areas that they had passed by in their march from Mindanao to Malacañang to press for ownership of lands given but "taken away" from them.

Yesterday, the farmers led by the Mapalad Multi-Purpose Cooperative were on their 52nd day of their 1,700-kilometer march to Malacañang which they dubbed "Walk for Sumilao Land, Walk for Justice."

The farmers said they were overwhelmed by how the communities welcomed them and provided them with food and safe places to sleep.

"Mr. Kaliluhan" was given by the Bramo-Kamao, a people's organization in Liluan City, Leyte, that joined their march for one day.

The farmers have decided not to cook Mr. Kaliluhan but bring it with them instead throughout their walk to Malacañang, said Pilipinas Palma, policy advocacy officer of Balaod-Mindanaw, a Mindanao-based nongovernment organization helping the legal case of the Sumilao farmers.

"Mr. Kaliluhan is a symbol for the Sumilao farmers who got blisters, wounds, and other skin allergies while marching," she said.

In the course of the farmers' walk, many fainted, vomited, got fever, cough, and colds, but they chose to continue, Palma said.

On Wednesday, Joel Anlicao, 34, one of the farmers, was confined at the San Pablo City Medical Center after suffering severe stomach pains upon reaching San Pablo City.

Anlicao's confinement prompted the protest march to stop for several hours, said Cita Esmao, head of the support group Ugnayan ng mga Magsasaka sa Quezon.

On Thursday, the farmers had a rest and discussed their case in the guesthouse of the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Forestry, and Natural Resources Research and Development after their march along the national highway from San Pablo City to Los Baños.

They continued their walk from Los Baños to San Pedro, Laguna on Friday and vowed to reach Metro Manila on Monday.

Composed of Higaonon tribe members, the farmers are seeking to reclaim a 144-hectare land in Barangay San Vicente, Sumilao, earlier awarded to the 137 farmer-beneficiaries.

They said the property was an agricultural land covered by the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) and they were the beneficiaries of the property.

The Supreme Court upheld the decision to convert the land use to agro-industrial and give the land to the Quisumbing family in 1999.

In 2004, the farmers revived the case and asked the Department of Agrarian Reform to stop the conversion, but the department said they had no jurisdiction to hear the petition.

Rituals

Enduring stormy weather or simply heavy rains or the searing heat of the sun, the farmers' spirits remained high.

But Claudio Gallego Jr., program officer of Balaod-Mindanaw, said the farmers did not experience the three typhoons that hit the country in the past two weeks.

"It seemed they were faster than the typhoons," Gallego said, adding that the farmers were marching five kilometers per hour on the average.

He said the Sumilao farmers were thankful of their Higaonon god, Magbabaya.

"They believed that Mambabaya responded to their prayers in a ritual they performed in Matnog, Sorsogon," Gallego said.

SUMILAO farmers say they have changed slippers three to four times since Day 1 of their 60-day march to Malacañang. NIÑA CATHERINE CALLEJA/INQUIRER SOUTHERN LUZON

He explained that in the ritual that is usually led by the Higaonon elders, they called on their ancestors and offered food for Magbabaya.

The farmers asked for safe travel, good weather and health, and the success of their case.

Berhilda "Nanay Hilda" Sanahan, 58, the oldest and one of the 15 women marchers, called on DAR to do their job and have pity on the farmers. When asked how was the walk, Sanahan burst into tears and showed her swollen foot.

She said she was limping yet she was trying to march as fast as the others.

"I just bear the pain and pray to God for me to reach Manila and tell [the officials] about the poverty in our place," she said.

She was persistent to join the march even though her children did not allow her, she said. *Niña Catherine Calleja with a report from Romulo Ponte, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

SPORTS

Tigers, Aces cream foes

GAMES TODAY (*Ynares Center*)
4:30 p.m.—Air21 vs Welcoat
6:30 p.m.—Magnolia vs Talk N Text

By June Navarro

LUCENA CITY—THE COCA-COLA TIGERS are starting to enjoy a few good things just two games into the trade that sent Asi Taulava to them. Like winning and beating a team by a wide margin.

The Tigers whipped the Sta. Lucia Realtors, 94-79, last night at the Quezon Convention Center here, halting an eight-game losing skid that had driven them deep down in the cellar of the Smart-PBA Philippine Cup.

Taulava mainly stopped the bleeding after dishing out another monster performance of 26 points, 24 rebounds and five assists that snapped a long winless spell by the Tigers that began after they subdued the Welcoat Dragons during the conference opener.

Aside from churning out a breakthrough triumph, the Tigers also avenged their 40-point rout by the Realtors in the first round.

Suiting up for the Tigers for the second straight time since being traded by the Talk 'N Text Phone Pals, Taulava proved to be the big difference, particularly in the shaded area where the 2003 season MVP joined forces with Mark Telan to pave the way for 56 inside points for Coca-Cola.

Alaska weathered Mark Caguioa's 28-point eruption to nip Barangay Ginebra, 87-82, in the other out-of-town game.

The Aces, who leaned on Willie Miller's 23 points and Jeffrey Cariaso's 18 markers, improved to 7-4 while sending the Kings to their seventh defeat in 11 games.

The scores:

First Game

COCA-COLA 94—Taulava 26, Telan 23, Duremdes 15, Cabagnot 11, Dimaunahan 7, Buenafe 4, Isip 4, Enrile 2, Caceres 2, Tolomia 0.

STA. LUCIA 79—Williams 18, Yeo 13, Reyes 11, Espino 10, Aquino 8, Mendoza 7, Daa 4, Omolon 4, Miranda 2, Gonzales 2, Coronel 0, Butel 0.

Quarters: 30-17, 51-38, 68-59, 94-79

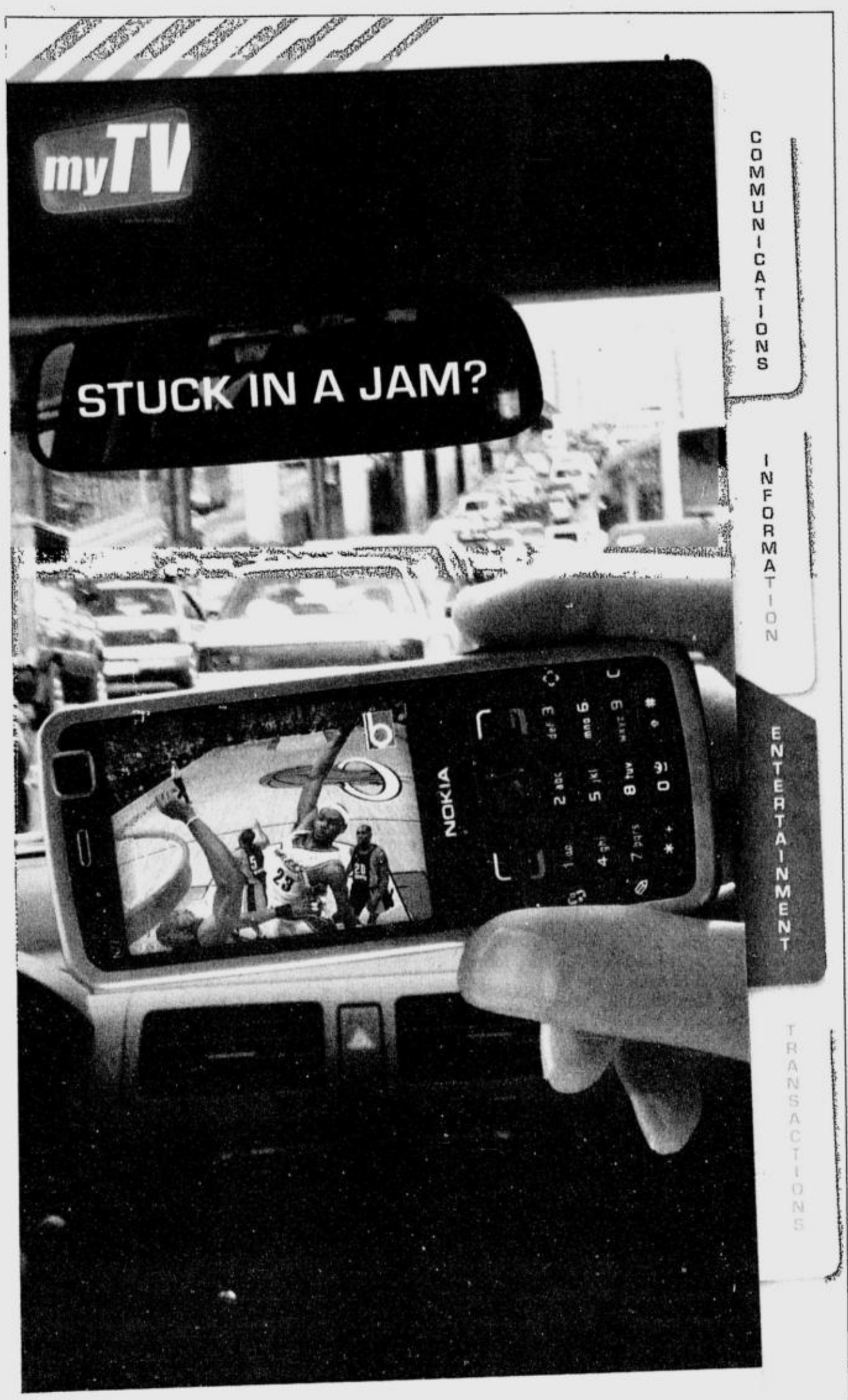
Second Game

ALASKA 87—Miller 23, Cariaso 18, Thoss 11, Cortez 10, Hugnatan 8, Ferriols 8, Dela Cruz 7, Quinahan 2, Bono 0, Laure 0, Cabatu 0.

GINEBRA 82—Caguioa 28, Artadi 13, Helterbrand 9, Menk 9, Tubid 7, Salvacion 6, Reavis 5, Mamaril 4, Macapagal 1, Aquino 0.

Quarters: 27-17, 50-32, 66-63, 87-82

More Sports, including SEA Games, on A27-A30



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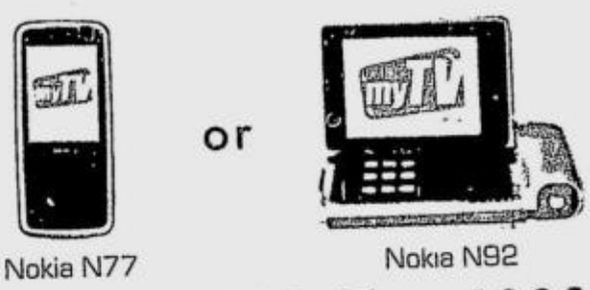

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SERENDIPITY STREET

Homemakers' haunt a treasure trove of vintage house parts

By Tina G. Santos

FOR DECADES, THIS PART OF the city has been literally offering bits and pieces of the old Manila.

The stretch of Laon-Laan Street in Sampaloc is a favorite haunt of homemakers as well as serious antique collectors searching for used but sturdy housing materials.

"This street is quite popular, particularly among people who find fulfillment in building new homes using vintage parts," Catalina Co-Guerrero, owner of one of the few surviving demolition and secondhand shops in the area, said in Filipino *(See related story below)*.

The used housing materials include wooden beams and planks, intricately carved doors and wall brackets, wrought-iron grills with unique designs, and other still usable portions of demolished houses.

There are also local hardwood varieties—*kamagong, molave, balayong, tanguile* and *narra*, among others—of every size and shape.

Apart from condemned and neglected structures, partially burnt houses are also rich sources of construction materials—from wood balusters and lampposts to cobblestones and *piedra china*, Guerrero told the INQUIRER during an interview in her Manila house which was also built using "recycled" parts taken from ancestral houses in the city.

These include a huge ancient gate which leads to a walkway paved with *piedra china* and bricks. Guerrero's love affair with antique objects also extends to vintage furniture pieces, most of which were fashioned from hardwood salvaged from demolished structures.

Guerrero, 70, was among the first in the area to get into the business of salvaging. She has been in this line of work for around 40 years.

According to her, there used to be more shops like the one she owns on Laon-Laan Street.

Fewer shops

"Marami dati, halos tabi-tabi talaga (There were a lot before, almost standing wall to wall)," she told the INQUIRER. *"Pero marami nang nagsara. Kaunti na lang kami ngayon* (But many shops have already closed down. There are only a few of us now)."

Unlike those of her competitors', Guerrero's shop has grown bigger over the years. She also owns other property in the area, a convenient place for storing her goods.

Part of her shop has also been turned into a work area where experienced furniture makers and woodcarvers churn out pieces made of old wood.

Guerrero said most of the secondhand housing materials she sells come from houses torn down, mostly in the Binondo and Quiapo areas. At times, she goes to other culture-rich provinces like Quezon, Bulacan, Pampanga, Nueva Ecija and the Ilocos region in search of good buys.

She added that profits from the demolition business could yield a return of about 200 percent to 300 percent on one's investment.

"Salvageable materials not only mean wood but also galvanized roofing, steel bars and even concrete debris. We also sell concrete debris to those who need fillers for building foundations," she added.

Though she admitted that business these days is not as brisk as before, Guerrero believes that there will always be a demand for pieces that hark back to a bygone era.

"Many people choose to build their homes using a hodgepodge of secondhand building components because they want their homes to evoke nostalgia," she said. "Old is in. Even if an establishment has a modern setting, there will always be an antique accent piece."

Built to last

And these items, especially solid hardwood, are sturdier, having survived time and the elements, she explained.

"These pieces are also excellent examples when it comes to designs," she added as she pointed to a cabinet made of *narra* with fine wood etchings and *capiz* shell inlays.

According to her, she has had clients who claimed that they shifted to furniture made from secondhand housing materials after they got tired of seeing their modern pieces falling apart.

But Sonny Luib, owner of a similar shop at the corner of Laon-Laan and Prudencio Streets pointed out that the materials may be secondhand but it doesn't mean that these come cheap.

"Old things command higher prices, that's why some people see them as good investments because they never depreciate," said Luib who used to work for Guerrero until he established his own business three years ago.

A FURNITURE maker at Catalina Co-Guerrero's secondhand shop fashions something new out of old materials. PHOTOS BY RODEL ROTONI

Over the years, the businesses of Guerrero and Luib have steadily grown, catering to both locals and foreigners.

Guerrero took pride in saying that most of her merchandise have found their way to the houses of the rich and famous, including government officials, businessmen and celebrities.

She named former senator and Foreign Affairs Secretary (Alberto) Romulo, business titans like the Zobels and the Aranetas and movie and television actress Gloria Diaz as among her clients. "Since most of the old articles and antiques are very expensive, it's mostly the affluent who buy these."

Interior designers and architects who love to mix the old with the new are also frequent visitors to Laon-Laan, she added.

"Once in a while, we also have practical young couples and ordinary homeowners who want to invest in these kinds of housing materials, knowing that these will last a lifetime," Guerrero said.

Surprisingly, although she is the first to admit that the business has been good to her and her family, Guerrero said she believes that old houses should not be demolished but restored instead.

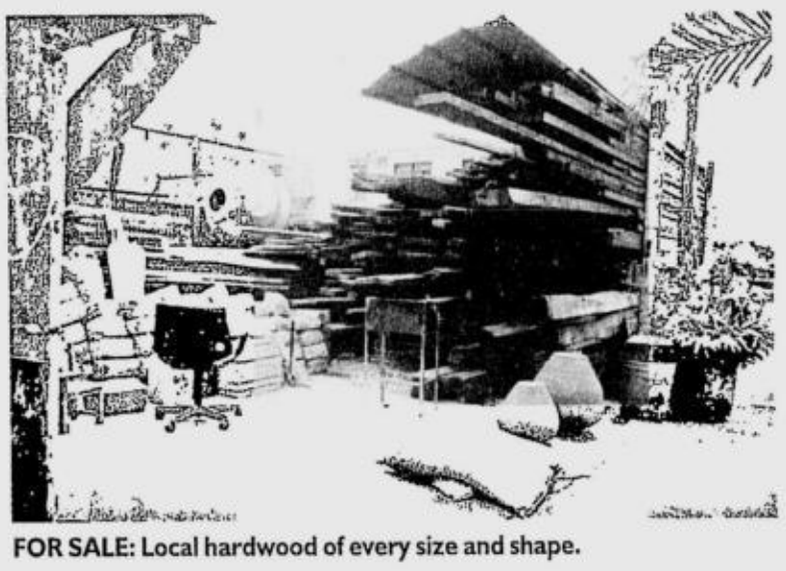
"In other countries, it's against the law to tear down old structures. People are serious about conservation but nobody seems to be doing anything about it here," she lamented although she quickly added that she was not blaming anybody or the government.

"I'm very much in favor of preserving antique structures. If I see any serious efforts toward this end, I'm all for it," she said.

And what will happen to her business then?

"God is good. I know He'll give me something else," Guerrero said.

YOU CAN easily spot Guerrero's shop on Laon-Laan Street because of the assorted old house parts you see in front of the establishment.



FOR SALE: Local hardwood of every size and shape.

'Demolition woman' is an outstanding Manilan

By Tina G. Santos

DESTROYING WHAT OTHERS had built may not seem a good idea for a business.

But it is for Catalina Co-Guerrero.

TALES OF THE CITY

The 70-year-old widow is considered one of the pioneers in the business of buying and selling secondhand lumber and housing materials. Single-handedly, she has made Laon-Laan Street in Sampaloc, Manila the place to go for finding Philippine hardwood, posts, doors, windows and practically everything that can be salvaged from demolished houses and establishments.

Her name may not be familiar to most people but to those who know her, Guerrero's life is a rags-to-riches story.

During the ceremonies marking the 436th anniversary of the founding of Manila last June, she was recognized by the city government as among this year's outstanding Manilans for her achievements in the field of entrepreneurial leadership.

She was cited as a valuable resident of the city "for serving as a fervent inspiration that one can succeed through hard work and determination, tempered with humility, patience and faith in the Almighty."

Born to a poor couple, Guerrero said she had to stop schooling and start working at a young age, selling ripe mangoes and clothes, among other things.

"I also used to collect leftover food in houses which I sold to hog raisers," added Guerrero, who only finished third grade.

Armed only with prayers and sheer determination, she started to work her way out of poverty. While working as a real estate agent, she bumped into the business of demolishing old houses and thought about selling salvageable items such as wooden doors, floors, panels, and cobblestones to anyone who wanted used housing materials.

"Some of the lots I was asked to sell had old houses ready for demolition," she said in Filipino. "There were times when property owners did not give me my commission so I thought of selling the old housing materials I had salvaged after the demolition was over."

CATALINA Co-Guerrero attributes her success to prayers and good deeds. In her spare time, she helps out in the beautification of Laon-Laan Street. RODEL ROTONI

Little did she know that the simple decision she made 40 years ago—coupled with her inherent business sense—would turn her life around.

Her business has now become a household name in secondhand housing materials, with some of her clients coming from society's elite.

"These materials were sometimes regarded as junk because they're old. What some people don't realize is that the older, the better, the more expensive and the more valuable," she explained.

Guerrero recently expanded her business by getting into the construction and sale of townhouses. She was quick to add, however, that she has no plans of leaving behind the business that has not only saved her family from the poor house but also ensured a secure future for her six children.

"Thankfully, my late husband and I were able to send all of our children to the best schools. I didn't want them to experience what I went through that's why I strove hard to give them the best that I could," the teary-eyed widow told the INQUIRER.

She said she considers being prayerful and doing good things for other people the secret to her continuous success.

"How can I explain all these blessings? Many powerful people failed because they did not seek the help of God. But many ordinary people succeeded because of Him," she said.

"All the blessings I have now come directly from Him," Guerrero added, which is why she has made a vow to God to help her community and those who have less in life.

For the past years, she has been giving financial assistance, albeit anonymously, to civic and humanitarian groups.

Through her businesses, Guerrero also provides employment, even to former prisoners who have been ostracized by society.

She has likewise been actively involved in beautifying Laon Laan Street and its surroundings, clearing up drainages and planting trees on sidewalks. The successful businesswoman has been helping out in the needs of her parish and reaching out to the less fortunate in her neighborhood.

"This is my way of giving something back to the community," she stressed.

Guerrero has already acquired several pieces of property on Laon Laan, including townhouses and lots which serve as a repository for used building parts and old wood.

However, she still keeps her first house, which is on the same street, "to serve as a reminder of my humble beginnings and to show that anyone can be successful with the right attitude and a strong faith."

"I ADMIRE OFWs for their willingness to practically give up their lives—not seeing their kids grow up and missing special occasions like Christmas—to provide them a brighter future. That's something priceless."
DINGDONG DANTES, November 2007

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

GLOBAL Pinoy

Editor **Gerry Lirio**

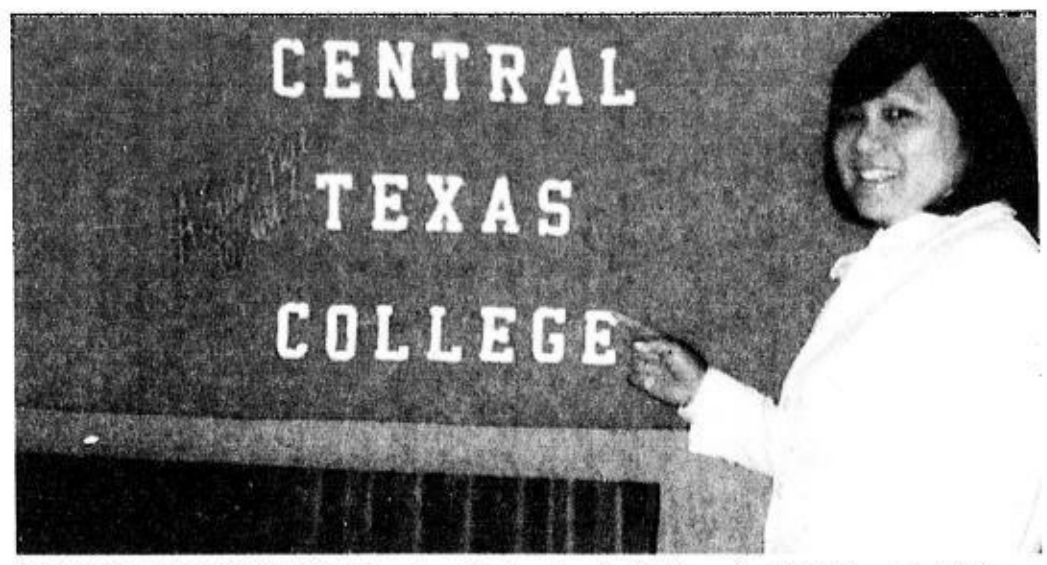
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2007

Goodbye, Jeric

Hagonoy councilor and Global Pinoy contributor Jeric Contreras, who died in an accident Nov. 14, was buried at the Hagonoy town cemetery last Saturday without his OFW mother detained in Japan even knowing he's dead.

This section is dedicated to Filipinos overseas toiling on land and at sea, in factories, in construction sites and in the homes of the world, and wherever work can be contracted to secure a better life for their families. These are their stories.

Korean wives' rights fighter is a Cebuana



NOT A PLAIN HOUSEWIFE. Fe Gimarino-Kim teaches English in a school in Incheon, South Korea.

By Joy Gador
Contributor

In the land of Kim and 'kimchi,' this teacher shows wisdom and passion in articulating the plight of Filipinas married to Koreans

SEOUL—PEOPLE WHO HAD known Fe Gimarino-Kim as a mere housewife of a Korean electrical maintenance engineer would certainly wonder how she became a faculty approval specialist in the Pacific Far East Campus of Central Texas College in Incheon, South Korea.

As a faculty approval specialist, Fe screens, evaluates and reviews the qualifications of American applicants for teaching jobs in this prestigious school before the deserving ones are finally selected by the campus dean for employment.

Fe's astronomical rise to this sensitive position came in 2001 after having been promoted from various posts in a span of only two years—from transcript clerk in July 1999 to payroll clerk and later administrative clerk in 2001.

But even her initial employment as transcript clerk was a big surprise, if not a miracle. She was the only Filipino among 12 applicants. The rest were Koreans, and three of them graduated from universities in the US. What made it surprising? Fe was not computer literate.

Yet, she got the nod of the five-member screening panel, all impressed by her attitude. When asked how well she could handle the computer, Fe honestly admitted her inexperience, but quickly added: "Just give me a month because I learn fast."

Koreans' Filipino wives

Now Fe is also the founder-president of the Filipino Korean Spouses Association (FKSA), whose mission is to help Filipinos like her who are married to Koreans and are living in Korea. Like the others before her, communication was the main problem between Korean husbands and their Filipino wives, apart from their cultural differences.

Thus Fe looked for an organization willing to provide free Korean language lessons to various nationalities married to Koreans. In return, Fe teaches them English.

In June 2004, three years after founding the Filipino-Korean group, Fe petitioned the Philippine Embassy in Seoul to ask the Korean government that foreign women victims of domestic violence be accorded permanent residency status should their husbands divorce them. Her petition was, not only acted upon by the Philippine embassy, but also enacted into law by the Korean government.

"The Korean government also provides assistance, in cooperation with non-government organizations, in providing counseling services before, during and after inter-racial marriages. Both marrying couple must respect and adjust to each other's culture for them to have a happy and lasting relationship," explains Fe, who apparently knows whereof she speaks.

Successful marriage

Fe herself has a very successful marriage. "Indeed, I am grateful to my husband for supporting me in helping our less fortunate *kababayans* (compatriots) in solving their marital problems," Fe zealously points out.

She says her husband even acts as interpreter and goes out of his way to give advice to his fellow Koreans.

Few knew, however, that Fe also used to have that foreign language problem. But through self-study, Fe learned how to read and speak Korean. That was in 1997, only a year after she settled in Korea with her husband in 1996.

It was oceans and decades away childhood in Cebu from her humble beginnings in Asturias, Cebu where she was born to poor parents in 1958.

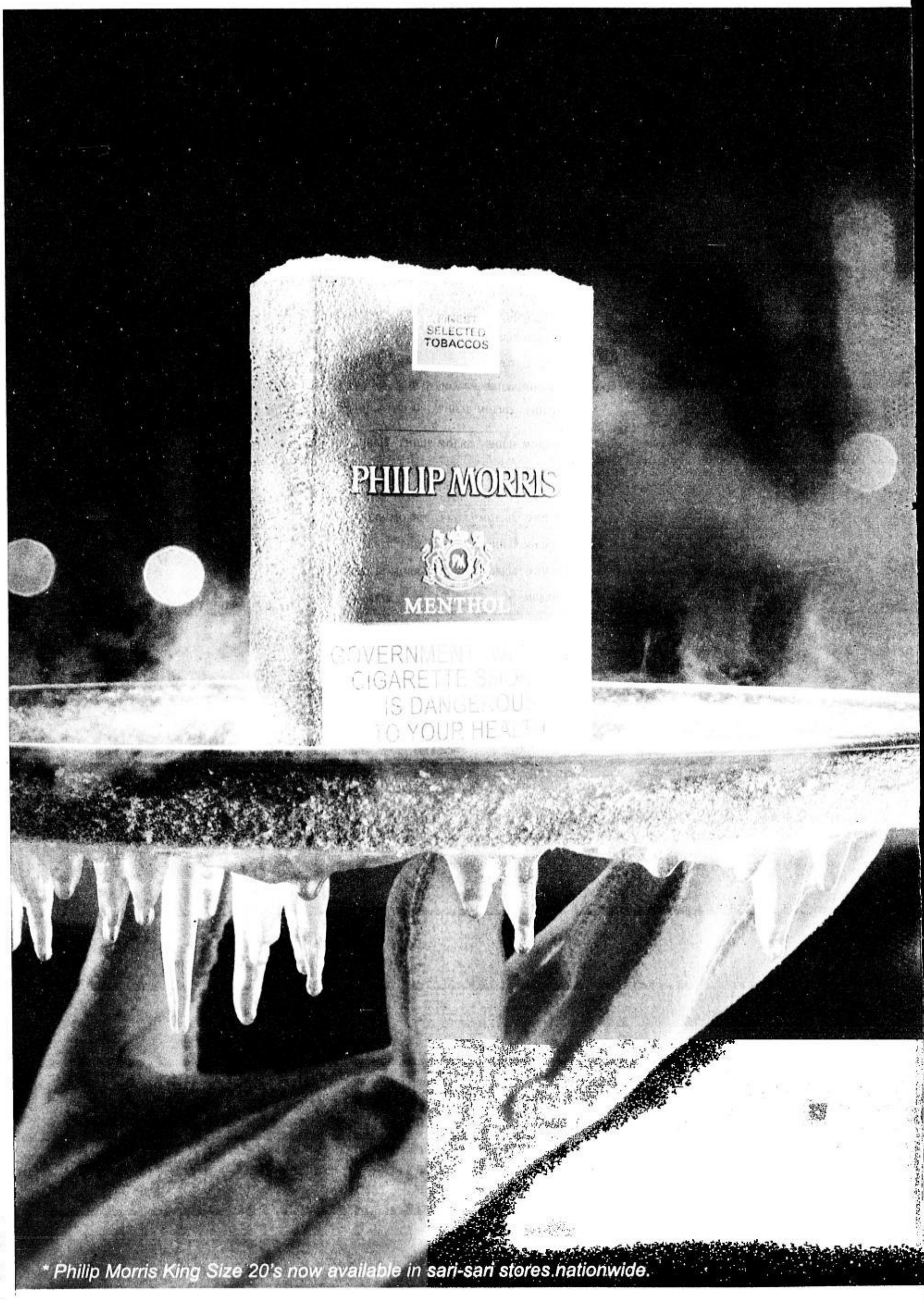
The fourth in a brood of nine, Fe dreamed and wanted to finish college to have a decent job and a better life for her family. Though her father was a carpenter, his income was not enough to send all the children to school.

In Fe's young mind, poverty could never be a hindrance to success in life. She then proceeded to work as a sales lady in a watch and jewelry service center in Cebu City, while her parents migrated to Davao City to look for a better life.

Fe later joined her family in Davao, and worked as a photocopier operator. She still had that ambition to finish her education so in June 1978, at the age of 20, she enrolled in first year high school and attended evening classes.

The following year, she took the Philip-

KOREAN/ A25



No visas yet for US-bound nurses

IMFO

Lourdes Santos Tancinco

TWO DAYS AGO, PRESIDENT BUSH vetoed the Labor HHS Education Appropriation Act of 2008 which was passed by Congress. This bill addresses the needs and priorities of the American people in the field of health care. There are many adverse effects of his decision which includes, among others, the failure to pass the home heating assistance for 1.5 million American families through a Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program.

Critical shortage

Unknown to many, there are immigration related advocacy groups that believe that this veto is an indication that additional visas for registered nurses may be re-incorporated again should the bill go back to Congress for amendment. If this piece of immigrant provision is successfully incorporated, then there would be hope again for US-bound registered nurses.

The US is suffering from a critical shortage of registered nurses and other health care workers. There may be several reasons attributed to this shortage. Retiring baby boomers who comprise a good portion of working physicians and nurses will considerably weaken the labor force starting in the next three to five years. In addition, medical and nursing schools are not producing enough new graduates to meet demand.

However, this diminishing pipeline is not necessarily due to a lack of interested local candidates. Applications to nursing programs have been rising, but the number of students being denied admission has grown six-fold since 2002, according to a study made by the PwC Health Research Institute.

According to the study, the total number of registered nurses has increased by 75 percent since 1980, but will begin to decline in 2010, the first decrease in decades.

Perhaps the biggest reason for this is that nursing schools cannot hire enough faculty members to develop their programs since universities have few financial reasons to do so. Moreover, while hospitals receive significant federal funding for medical education, they are not similarly subsidized for training nurses.

RP top supplier of nurses

It is undeniable that many incentives are provided by Federal and state governments to increase the number of nurses in the field. However, the solution that is often taken is the recruitment of foreign nurses. The Philippines is one of the top supplier of nurses.

Even if there is a shortage of registered nurses, no visas are being issued by the US State Department or Citizenship and Immigration Services. There is what you call a lack of allocated visas for this type of occupation or a "retrogression."

All visas for '06 used

The quota system for issuance of US visas caused this retrogression of priority dates. In a given year, only 140,000 visas are allocated for all employment-based petitions. Only 70,000 are allocated under the third employment-based preference. Aside from the numerical limit set by Congress on the issuance of visas, the State Department also follows a per country limit. Each country may not avail of more than 7 percent of what is allocated for each preference category.

All the 70,000 visas for 2006 fiscal year have been used. In 2006, another 50,000 visas were added by Congress but even these 50,000 were all used by Nov. 1, 2006 resulting in further retrogression.

The visa bulletin for the month of December 2007 shows that there is still retrogression and that the petitions approved on Sept. 1, 2002 are the ones being issued the visas. Eligible RN candidates may still be beneficiaries of petitions but they have to wait for their priority dates to be current or for new legislation to add more visas to their category.

While the NCLEX is now available in the Philippines and that there is an increase in the number of nurses who graduated from reputable universities, the fact remains that no visas are still being issued to allow the nurses to reside and work in the United States.

Retrogression

The exception for those who suffer from the effect of retrogression are those who were able to file their petitions and adjustment of status before November 2006 and those who were able to file between July 17 and Aug. 31, when the State Department declared excess visas.

Others who were not able to file are waiting for their priority dates to become current. This will happen when the retrogression is lifted and additional visas are declared available through new legislation.

The HHS bill (HR 3043) contained that immigration provision but it was stricken off by Congress during conference and now this bill was vetoed by President Bush. What is the likelihood that a new immigration provision adding more visas for registered nurses is passed this year? I am disheartened with the current legislative trend, especially with the election year coming up, but I remain hopeful.

(IMFO stands for Immigration Information. Tancinco may be reached at law@tancinco.com or in her Makati law office 887-7177).

GIMARINO-KIM (right) and Philippine Ambassador to South Korea Susan Castrence during the Philippine Independence Day rites in June.

Korean wives' rights . . .

From page A24

pine Examination Placement Test, an aptitude exam for those deserving to go to college without having to finish four years of high school education.

She finished Bachelor of Science in Commerce, major in Accounting, at the University of Mindanao in Davao City in October 1984 and landed a job in an accounting firm and later at a congressional district office in Mati, Davao Oriental.

In June 1989, Fe took up law and finished the course in 1993-94 but failed to take the bar examination. She was already managing her own business at that time and doing voluntary missionary work with the St. Mary's Caritas Davao until she met and married her Korean husband in 1996.

The marriage didn't dampen her passion for missionary work. Obviously, Fe brought it all with her all the way to Korea.

Let's party on Dec. 20

TO COMMEMORATE A CENTURY OF Filipino diaspora, a group of migrant workers are inviting fellow OFWs to a Christmas party on Dec. 20.

A pot luck lunch will be held while games are set for children of interested migrant workers who are in town for the holidays, organizers said. The whole-day party which will be held at Quezon Memorial Circle, will also feature a concert for OFWs.

The first OFWs are believed to be migrant workers who sailed to Hawaii in 1906 to work as sugar and pineapple planters.

For inquiries, contact the organizers at (0919) 766-3641 and (632) 927-0564 or via e-mail at mdrebueno@yahoo.com.

g: Cigarette smoking to your health

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Too little or too much sleep increases risk of mortality says study

WASHINGTON—SLEEPING too little or too much can significantly increase the risk of mortality, according to a study conducted in Britain, the results of which were published in the United States on Saturday.

A decrease in sleep duration among participants sleeping six, seven or eight hours was associated with a 110-percent excess risk of cardiovascular mortality, said the study authored by Jane Ferrie of the University College London Medical School in London.

However, an increase in sleep duration among those sleeping seven or eight hours was associated with a 110 percent excess risk of noncardiovascular mortality, it found.

The study focused on 10,308 participants between 35 and 55 years of age.

"In terms of prevention, our findings indicate that consistently sleeping seven or eight hours per night is optimal for health," Doctor Ferrie said in a statement.

She said mortality rates were lower in participants who first slept five to six hours or less but then reported extended hours of sleep.

Meanwhile, higher levels of mortality for those who slept more than eight hours a day imply that sleep restriction should be considered, Ferrie said.

The study is published in the Dec. 1 issue of Sleep, which is the official journal of the Associated Professional Sleep Societies, LLC. *AFP*

Pope stresses importance of hope in latest teaching

VATICAN CITY—ATHEISM MAY BE "UNDERstandable" when confronted with evil and suffering, Pope Benedict XVI wrote Friday in his second encyclical, the highest papal teaching. But man's attempt to banish God, he wrote, "has led to the greatest forms of cruelty and violations of justice," whether through Marxist revolution or the science that produced the atomic bomb.

"To protest against God in the name of justice is not helpful," the 80-year-old pope wrote. "A world without God is a world without hope. Only God can create justice. And faith gives us the certainty that he does so."

The document, called "Saved by Hope," weaves a complex but elegant argument for the necessity of hope, drawing deeply on history, philosophy and theology. His first encyclical, issued almost two years ago, concerned charity and love.

Thus, Benedict, whose nearly three-year papacy has stressed a return to theological basics, has now explicitly addressed two of the three fundamental Christians values of faith, hope and charity.

"We all ask ourselves if there will be a third encyclical on faith," the Rev. Federico Lombardi, the pope's spokesperson, told reporters here as the document was released. "It cannot be excluded, but it's not planned."

THE POPE signing his second encyclical, "Spe Salvi" (Saved Through Hope), Nov. 30. AFP

Indeed, an encyclical on faith may not be necessary, since Benedict argues that hope and faith in God are nearly "interchangeable."

"The dark door of time, of the future has been thrown open," he wrote. "The one who has hope lives differently; the one who hopes has been granted the gift of a new life."

"To come to know God—the true God—means to receive hope," he wrote.

The document, which runs 76 pages in English, was written largely over the summer—by the pope himself, Lombardi said—in what church officials say was a period of intense writing and study. Benedict has also been working on a third encyclical, concerning church teaching on social issues, and the second volume on his biography of Christ. The third encyclical is expected to be released early next year. *NYT*

Hostage drama at Clinton office

ROCHESTER, NEW HAMPshire—A man claiming to be armed with a bomb took over one of US presidential hopeful Hillary Clinton's campaign offices for more than five hours Friday before surrendering to police.

The man, believed to have a history of mental illness, walked into the New Hampshire office at around 1 p.m., taking an unknown number of people hostage and reportedly demanding to speak to the former first lady.

Clinton, who was near Washington at the time of the hostage-taking, said after the standoff ended the incident had been hard on her and her campaign.

"It's been a very difficult day, personally and emotionally," Clinton told reporters, adding that she had been in touch with the families of those being held hostage throughout the day.

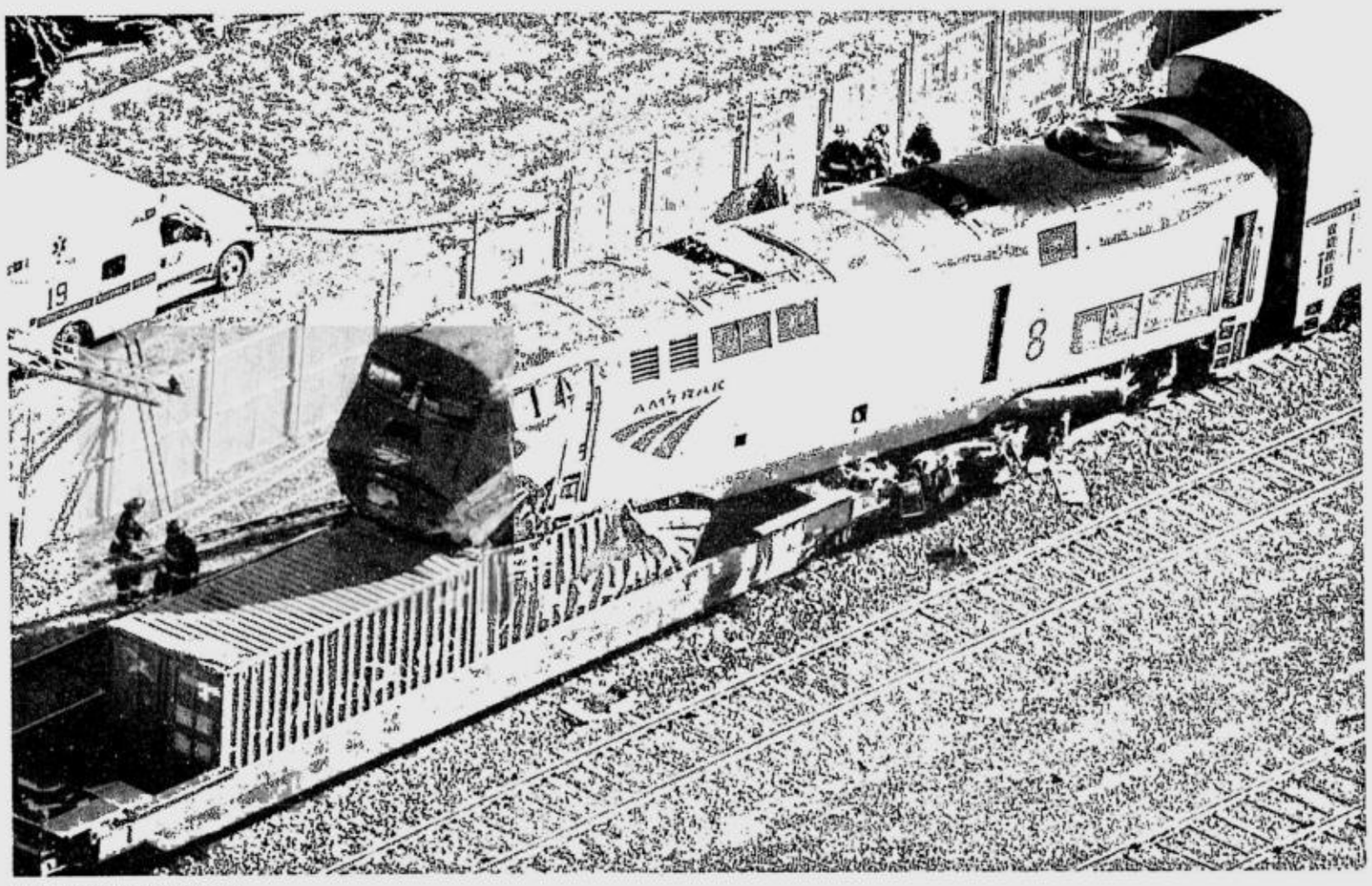
"I'm so grateful this day has ended well," said the former first lady, who was due to travel immediately to New Hampshire to thank law enforcement officers who helped resolve the standoff.

A young woman initially raised the alarm after fleeing the building with her young child when the hostage-taker entered Clinton's office.

Witness Lettie Tzizik said: "A young woman with a 6-month- or 8-month-old infant came rushing into the store just in tears, and she said, 'You need to call 911. A man has just walked into the Clinton office, opened his coat and showed us a bomb strapped to his chest with duct tape."

Armed police rapidly arrived on the scene, with armed units setting up across the street while negotiators established communication.

The hostage-taker, named by US television networks as Lee Eisenberg, was believed to have released two hostages around two hours into the standoff before giving up the last two around three hours later. *AFP*



PIGGYBACK RIDE
The locomotive of an Amtrak train rests on top of a container car on a track after the Amtrak train plowed into the back of a freight train on Nov. 30, on Chicago's South Side. Most of the 187 passengers walked away, but several Amtrak employees in the locomotive were hurt. AP

Bhutto to launch election campaign

PESHAWAR, PAKISTAN—FORmer Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto arrived in northwestern Pakistan on Saturday to launch her election campaign, a day after unveiling her party's platform despite calls from other opposition groups to boycott the Jan. 8 vote.

Bhutto traveled in a bulletproof black Mercedes under police escort from the capital, Islamabad, to Peshawar and was greeted by hundreds of flag-waving supporters of her Pakistan People's Party who chanted "Long Live Benazir!"

Bhutto, a two-time prime minister whose return to Pakistan from exile in October was targeted by suicide bombers, is the first major political leader to launch a campaign since President Pervez Musharraf quit his army post and became a civilian leader this past week. *AP*

US withdraws UN text backing Mideast talks

UNITED NATIONS—THE UNITed States Friday withdrew a resolution it presented to the UN Security Council endorsing the relaunch of the Israeli-Palestinian peace talks agreed in Annapolis, a diplomat here said.

Pressed for a reason—possibly that Israelis and Palestinians were not consulted before the text was drafted—US officials refused to be drawn, although their statements indicated some embarrassment.

"We looked at this matter, talked about it and at the end of the day the Secretary (of State Condoleezza Rice) believes that the positive results of Annapolis speak by themselves," said State Department spokesperson Sean McCormack.

"You take a look at all the positive effects that came out of Annapolis and we were not sure that we saw a need to add anything to the conversation. Sometimes the results of the events speak for themselves," he added.

The US draft said the council "endorses the program of action for negotiations and implementation of outstanding obligations ... agreed upon by the Israeli and Palestinian leadership at Annapolis, Maryland, on Nov. 27, 2007."

On Thursday, after the session at which the draft was submitted, the US ambassador to the UN, Zalmay Khalilzad, said Security Council members intended to discuss the text with the parties involved. *AFP*

Sudanese seek execution of UK teacher

NAIROBI, KENYA—HUNDREDS of demonstrators in Khartoum, Sudan's capital, poured into the streets on Friday demanding the execution of a British teacher who was convicted of insulting Islam because her class of 7-year-olds named a teddy bear Muhammad.

The protesters, some carrying swords, screamed, "Shame, shame on the UK!" and "Kill her, kill her by firing squad." They were calling for the death of Gillian Gibbons, the teacher who was sentenced on Thursday to 15 days in jail. Under Sudanese law, she could have spent six months behind bars and received 40 lashes.

Despite the display of outrage, witnesses said many of the protesters were government employees who had been ordered to demonstrate, and that aside from a large gathering outside the presidential palace, most of Khartoum was quiet. Imams across the city did bring up the controversial case in sermons after Friday Prayers. But few called for violence.

In Islam, insulting the Prophet Muhammad is a grave offense and worshiping idols is prohibited. British officials said they were pressing the Sudanese authorities to let Gibbons, 54, out of jail early, and they played down the protests.

The teddy-bear incident goes back to September when Gibbons, who taught at one of Sudan's most exclusive private schools, began a project on animals and asked her class to suggest a name for a teddy bear. The class voted resoundingly for Muhammad, one of the most common names in the Muslim world.

Gibbons told her students to take the bear home, photograph it and write a diary entry about it.

GIBBONS AFP

The entries were collected in a book called "My Name Is Muhammad." Most of her students were Muslim children from wealthy Sudanese families.

The government said that when some parents saw the book, they complained to the authorities. On Sunday, Gibbons was arrested. *NYT*

World AIDS Day commemorated amid signs of progress

PARIS—ACTIVISTS SOUGHT Saturday to keep the battle against HIV in the public eye on World AIDS Day in the face of growing complacency amid progress in treating and slowing the spread of the disease.

Even the Miss World beauty pageant on the Chinese holiday island of Sanya was enlisted to get out the message that the disease daily kills some 6,000 people.

Chinese President Hu Jintao appeared on the front page of major state-controlled newspapers shaking the hand of a woman HIV carrier the day after the UN warned up to 50 million Chinese are at risk of contracting HIV/AIDS.

Dec. 1 has become a time of grim stocktaking as AIDS campaigners worldwide sound the alarm over the disease's rampage through Africa, the threat it poses to Asia and former Soviet republics, and the risks to vulnerable communities such as sex workers, drug users and gay men.

In Australia, campaigners warned that complacency after earlier success in fighting HIV/AIDS risked giving rise to a new wave of infections.

"This is the moment it all could go astray. This is the moment when it can become a pandemic," said AIDS awareness educator Vince Lovegrove, calling for a new campaign aimed at a new generation.

Government figures show that by the end of 2006, 26,267 Australians had been diagnosed with HIV and 10,125 people had been diagnosed with AIDS, with 6,723 having died.

Last month, Unaids announced that the prevalence of HIV or AIDS—the percentage of the world's population living with the HIV virus or the disease it causes—peaked in the late 1990s.

The agency also reduced its estimate of the number of people living with HIV or AIDS to 33 million from nearly 40 million after overhauling data collection methods.

The tally of new infections has fallen, too, to an estimated 2.5 million in 2007 from three million in the late 1990s.

Meanwhile, the agonizing effort to bring antiretroviral (ARV) drugs to Africa, where more than two-thirds of the people with HIV/AIDS live, is now bearing fruit.

At the end of 2006, more than two million people were getting the vital pills, a 54-percent increase over the previous year, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria said Friday the number of people on antiretroviral drugs it is funding has doubled in the past year to 1.4 million.

"Despite substantial progress against AIDS worldwide, we are still losing ground," says James Shelton of the US Agency for International Development (Usaid) in a commentary appearing on Saturday in medical journal The Lancet.

He says treatment is still only available to about 10 percent of those in need, while in developing countries, "the number of new infections continues to dwarf the numbers who start antiretroviral therapy in developing countries."

Indonesia—which the UN says has the fastest growing HIV epidemic in Asia—marked the day with the launch of its first national campaign to promote the use of condoms, which currently account for less than one percent of contraception use.

The campaign in the world's most populous Muslim nation aims to remove the stigma of condom use. *AFP*

WHAT'S INSIDE

■ **Donaire** risks title today /A28

Sunday SPORTS

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■ **Celtics** hold off Heat; Sonics triumph/A35

Putra Cup no big deal for hosts

By Musong R. Castillo

BANGKOK—WHETHER BY CHANCE OR otherwise, the Bangkok Post, Thailand's No. 1 English newspaper, did not carry any of the championship-winning exploits of the Thais in the Putra Cup that ended in the Philippines on Friday.

The sports pages, all 16 of them, have been devoted mainly to football matches around the world, with the 24th Southeast Asian Games stories occupying little space save for the center spread that was devoted to the soccer event of the Games.

Even the Thai shooting team didn't get the space it deserved in the back page.

***

The tennis debacle that this Kingdom suffered in the Philippines during the 23rd Games in Manila two years ago has prompted the tennis association to seek help elsewhere.

Thailand has tapped the services of former US national coach Chuck Kriese to handle the Thais' training for the SEAG and the Beijing Olympics set next year, according to an article in the Post.

The Lawn Tennis Association of Thailand has given Kriese three marching orders: 1) improve the standard of coaching nationwide 2) make the already good players great and 3) win as many SEAG gold medals as possible.

Fil-Ams Cecil Mamiit and Eric Taino helped the Philippines to three gold medals in Manila in 2005, with Mamiit humbling Danai Udomchoke in the men's singles finals.

***

The PSC on Friday started taking care of the accommodations of the Philippine athletes that will be billeted at the Athletes Village here.

Around 670 Filipino athletes and officials will stay in the village, which is made up of 17 wings that comprise 170 rooms in all. Each air-conditioned, barracks-type room will have three occupants.

The bulk of Philippine athletes will start arriving Saturday in Bangkok and will take a four-hour bus ride to Nakhon Ratchasima and get themselves acclimatized. The opening ceremonies, which will be held a day after the King of Thailand celebrates his 80th birthday, will be on Dec. 6.

Skeet shooters try to end RP gold medal drought

By Musong R. Castillo

BANGKOK, THAILAND—THE PHILIPPINES' final shot at winning a gold medal in the first week of the 24th Southeast Asian Games will come from a shotgun.

Filipino skeet shooters, the defending individual and team champions, will take their turn Sunday at the Thailand Target and Clay Ranges here on the penultimate day of shooting competitions which have brought more heartbreak than joy to the RP Team.

Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla encountered ammunition trouble Saturday and finished way out of the medal in the 25-meter center fire for men before the 3-position air rifle team bowed out.

That left the men's skeet team of Gabriel Tong, Patricio Bernardo, Buboy Hollero and defending individual champ Brian Rosario and lady shooter Jacklyn de Guzman with the task of coming up with the first golden performance for the battered Philippine contingent seeking to repeat as overall champion.

ROSARIO: Title defense MUSONG R. CASTILLO

After five days of action, the Philippines only has a silver and a bronze to show. The trap team of Eric Ang, Carlos Carag and Jethro Dionisio placed second and Emerito Concepcion salvaged third in the 10-meter air rifle event.

Runners-up to the Philippines in Manila in 2005, the Thais, as of 3 p.m. Saturday, have already won 11 gold, 14 silver and five bronze medals to grab the overall lead, followed closely by Singapore, which has an 8-6-4 count and Vietnam with 6-3-10.

Padilla tallied 572 points, finishing in seventh place, just 10 points behind gold medal winner Xuan Vihn Hoang of Vietnam. Jakkrit Panichpatium of Thailand won the silver with a 579 total, while Mahn tuong Nguyen was third another two points off.

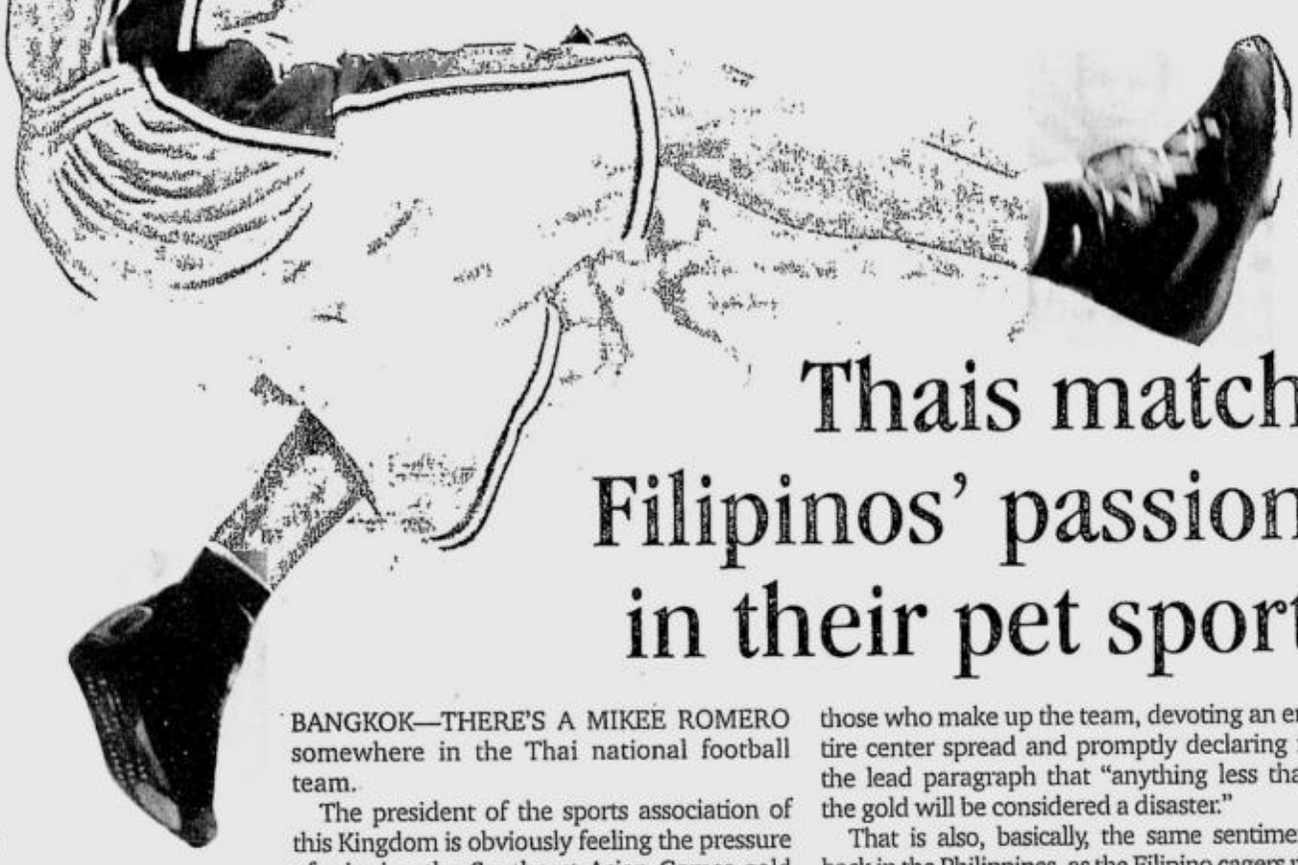
Concepcion subbed for the ailing Rocky Pardilla in the 3-position squad but could only finish ninth in a 12-man field, still the best for the Philippine squad.

The 46-year-old Concepcion, a Meralco meter technician back home who has won a total of seven SEAG gold medals in a career that started in the late 1980s, assembled a 1097 total, while Edwin Fernandez had a 1086 for 10th and Eddie Tomas 1070 for last place.

Padilla, whose P120,000 Pardini pistol jammed in the most crucial stages of his pet rapid fire pistol event on Friday, wound up without a medal in his 15th SEAG after the training 32-caliber ammunition he used—some of them 20 years old—acted up during his second five-minute, slow fire series.

"I just can't understand everything that happened," the 43-year-old Padilla, the country's brightest hope in the precision events, said. "This is the first time that this happened to me and it was so frustrating.

SKEET/ A29



WITH the likes of Gabe Norwood leading the RP charge, Mikee Romero is confident the Philippines can bring home the gold. PDI PHOTO

Thais match Filipinos' passion in their pet sport

BANGKOK—THERE'S A MIKEE ROMERO somewhere in the Thai national football team.

The president of the sports association of this Kingdom is obviously feeling the pressure of winning the Southeast Asian Games gold medal that matters most to this football-crazy nation.

And like port business tycoon Romero, who manages the Harbour Centre-RP team that will shoot for the basketball gold medal in a week, the Thai football coach is feeling the pressure all the more.

With football competition to open Sunday, the Bangkok Post has thrown the challenge at those who make up the team, devoting an entire center spread and promptly declaring in the lead paragraph that "anything less than the gold will be considered a disaster."

That is also, basically, the same sentiment back in the Philippines, as the Filipino cagers return to the SEAG after serving a two-year Fiba (international federation) ban because of a leadership crisis in their own sports association.

And while the Thai football coach cited the cold weather in Nakhon Ratchasima province as a possible hindrance in their bid for an "8-Peat," Romero came up with a bold pronouncement.

THAIS/ A29

BAYRON: Asian Tour-bound? PDI PHOTO

Fernando-Bayron SEAG swap likely

By Musong R. Castillo

BANGKOK—THE PHILIPPINE AMateur golf champion might just be able to play in the 24th Southeast Asian Games if the country's best won't be around.

With a chance to crash the Asian Tour as a pro, Jay Bayron might be forced to quit the Philippine team when it tees off to defend its team gold next week at the Bonanza layout in Nakhon Ratchasima, opening the door for Anthony Fernando to finally debut in the Games.

According to a very reliable INQUIRER source in the Philippines, Bayron is seriously considering to try his luck in the now-lucrative Asian Tour, which will hold its second leg of qualifying at the very same time that golf is played in the SEAG.

The 28-year-old Bayron, the low amateur in the RP Open won by Frankie Minoza last February, on Friday helped the Philippines to second place in the Putra Cup and would have been a prime contender for the individual medal here.

But foregoing the Asian qualifying could prove to be a long wait for Bayron, a standout for Canlubang for so many years in the Philippine Airlines Interclub and with Nike in the Fil-Am tournament.

"The NGAP (National Golf Association of the Philippines) will not be a hindrance to his (Bayron's) career," the source, who is very close to Bayron but requested not to be identified, told the INQUIRER in an overseas call.

"And the NGAP knows that Jay has served his country well and that he needs to also take care of himself and his future family."

Should Bayron decide to qualify, the Philippines will be represented in the SEAG by Fernando, who won the RP Am in Iloilo but missed the Nomura Cup in Taipei after his handlers pulled him out, and the Putra Cup because he was under suspension by the NGAP.

Fernando had posed for a popular golf equipment and apparel brand just after winning the RP Am, and the NGAP promptly suspended him for fear this apparent breach of amateur rules will be cited by other countries in international competitions.

But Fernando has since patched things up with the NGAP. He was not included in the original SEAG lineup since the others in the team—cousin Mark Fernando, Ferdinand Aunzo and Jonel Ababa—have also represented RP well in those two meets.

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REY "Boom Boom" Bautista (left) and Antonio "Barrio" Meza flex their muscles during the weigh-in and press conference at the Gateway Mall in Cubao. RODEL ROTONI

Bautista takes on Mexican

By Roy Luarca

FOR REY "BOOM BOOM" BAUTISTA, THE time for redemption has come. He hopes to return to the boxing limelight with a convincing victory over Mexican Antonio "Barrio" Meza in today's main event of the "Payback" card at the Araneta Coliseum.

"I can't wait to see action tomorrow (today)" said Bautista, whose 21-win string got snapped by a humiliating first round loss to WBO super featherweight titlist David Ponce de Leon of Mexico in August. "I am really eager to show our countrymen I can still make it big."

Meza is no pushover, however, boasting a 23-3-1 record, including 16 stoppages, and serving as a sparring partner to many Mexican champions.

"I like your country and I want to come back here.," said Meza, reportedly a southpaw but did some shadow boxing with an orthodox stance in a public preview the other day. "And the only way I can do that is to beat Bautista."

Both Bautista, who'll be staking his WBO international super bantamweight crown, and Meza easily made the limit during yesterday's official weigh-in held at the Gateway Mall.

Meza, from Mexicali, Mexico, registered 121 lbs, a pound under the 122 limit. The 21-year-old Bautista, who hails from Bohol, also came in at 121.

In the supporting main event, AJ "Bazooka" Banal (15-0-1, 12 KOs) will tangle with Mexican Jovanny "Bambino" Soto (25-7-1, 20 KOs). Both fighters made the super flyweight limit at exactly 115.

Set for 10-rounds, the bout stakes the WBO Youth super flyweight belt.

A special bonus is in store for paying fans at the Araneta Coliseum as the Nonito Donaire-Luis Maldonado fight will be shown via a giant TV screen inside the venue.

ABC-5 will broadcast the fight starting at 10 a.m while boxing fans from around the globe can watch the whole card by logging on to www.netvision.com.ph.

Third Force Promotions president and former PBA commissioner Noli Eala assured fans of a first-rate card.

Voluptuous lady ring announcer Amy Hayes will do the introductions wearing what she described as "something sexy but appropriate."

Donaire risks title today

Faces dangerous Maldonado in Connecticut

FILIPINO FLYWEIGHT CHAMPION Nonito Donaire will defend his IBF and IBO titles for the first time against mandatory challenger Luis Maldonado of Mexico in a 12-round battle set at the Foxwoods Casino in Mashantucket, Connecticut, today.

The bout, featuring two crafty and wily fighters, will be aired live starting at 10 a.m. by Solar Sports and GMA 7.

The Arthro Kontra Arthritis-backed Donaire easily made the weight at 111 lbs like Maldonado at the official weigh-in for their 112-lb encounter.

In so doing, Donaire silenced many detractors who kept on saying he won't be able to make the weight a month ago.

The 25-year-old world champion held his training camp at the famed ALA Gym in Cebu.

"I'm out to prove that I'm a legitimate champion and not just a one-hit wonder," said Donaire after the weigh-in. "I've had the best training at ALA Gym and I'm confident of beating Maldonado."

"I'll do what I can to take Maldonado out," Donaire said.

If successful, Donaire plans to move up to the super flyweight or bantamweight division, where he expects to fight some of the big names like Cristian Mijares, Jorge Arce, Fernando Montiel or even a rematch with the loud-mouthed Vic Darchinyan.

Donaire stopped Darchinyan in July to claim the crown and post his 17th straight win since his lone pro loss came in 2003.

That sensational victory raised Donaire's record to 18-1 with 11 knockouts.

The challenger, however, is even more menacing with a 37-1-1 card with 28 knockouts.

The Donaire-Maldonado fight will be shown on a giant screen inside the Araneta Coliseum today as a bonus for those who will watch the "Payback" card.

Salven L. Lagumbay, Contributor

NONITO Donaire, shown here with some supporters, tries on the glove he will use in today's fight.

TALE OF THE TAPE

Rey Boom Boom BAUTISTA		Antonio Barrio MEZA
21	AGE	25
5'6"	HEIGHT	5'4 ½"
69"	REACH	67"
Orthodox	STANCE	Southpaw

SPORTSWATCH

Tuason Memorial Cup today at Speedzone

THE COUNTRY'S FINEST KARTERS RACE for a cause as the Tuason Racing School stages the 8th Arthur Tuason Memorial Cup today at the Manila Speedzone.

The annual event is a charity race held in honor of legendary race car driver Arthur Tuason, father of TRS founder JP Tuason.

Proceeds of this year's race will benefit the Mabuhay Deseret Foundation, which helps arrange treatment for children born in need of corrective surgery.

There will be four race divisions, namely: the Goodyear division, e-Standard Insurance division, media and celebrity division and the enthusiasts division for experienced karters. For details, call 8177795 or e-mail info@tuasonracing.com.

Fistorama at NBN-4

FISTORAMA AIRS AT 10 P.M. TODAY ON NBN-4 with three action-filled amateur bouts. National pool members Junel Cantancio and Joegen Ladon slug it out in the main bout.

Fistorama's bouts are part of the PCSO Amateur Boxing Championship held every two months at the Cantada Sports Center in Bagumbayan, Taguig City. Fistorama is shown worldwide through ABS-CBN Global's the Filipino Channel, ANC/Kapamilya TV.

Golf Power Plus follows at 11 p.m. Tonight's program features the PCSO Women's Inter-Collegiate Beach Volleyball Challenge with Adamson University Team 2 tangling with Adamson Team 3.

Benitez grabs Asian, Shell karting plums

THE FINAL LEG HAS YET TO BE staged, but already Jet Racing skipper Javi Benitez has stamped his mark as the country's No. 1 young karter.

The 13-year-old Benitez recently claimed the Shell Helix Junior Karter of the Year crown after bagging both the overall ROK Junior and Formula 125 Open junior crowns of the local eight-leg series.

His victory in Saraburi, Thailand, last month, also assured Benitez of the Asian Karting Formula 125 Juniors plum, regardless of the results of the final leg to be held Dec. 15 in Macau.

With a total of 122 points, Benitez is beyond reach of chief rivals Rio Haryanto and Senna Sulaiman Noor of Indonesia and Nanin Indra-Payoung of Thailand.

Haryanto, last year's Asian Junior champion, is way behind with 67 points while Noor and Payoung are in fourth and fifth with 51 and 30 points, respectively.

Benitez wrapped up his campaign in the ROK Junior class with 482.5 points or a 57.5-point spread over Tuason Racing's Roby Benito, who ended with 425.

The Xavier School seventh grader likewise clinched the Formula 125 Open junior title with 411 points against Benito's 373.

"It's been a very challenging but rewarding year," said Benitez. "This season had been rough but it was a great learning experience."

JAVI Benitez (No. 81): Top karter

"Javi has really matured as far as his racing craft is concerned," said coach Elson Carpio.

Benitez is now preparing for the final leg in Macau, aiming to wind up the Asian Karting Series with aplomb.

Romina S. Austria

Tañamor gains Asian junior boxing semis

FAST-RISING CONRADO TAÑAMOR DOMinated Sri Lanka's Hewbwi Sanjeena, 30-15, to barge into the semifinals and assure himself of the bronze medal in the Asian Boxing Juniors championships in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

Fighting in the light flyweight class, Tañamor, a member of the RP-PLDT-Smart boxing team and younger brother of AIBA World Championships silver medalist Harry, eyes a seat in the finals against China's Zubiao Chen Friday in this slugfest featuring Asia's best boxers in the 15-17 age bracket.

In an overseas call to Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines president Manny T. Lopez, secretary-general Roger Fortaleza said Tañamor humbled the hard-fighting Sri Lankan with his superb counter-punching in the first two rounds before using smooth footwork to stay away from trouble in the last two rounds.

Tañamor shone during this year's Smart National Open at Cagayan de Oro City where he emerged as gold medalist in the junior division while representing Zamboanga City.

"This showed the importance of the National Open," said Lopez, who thanked PLDT-Smart chair Manny V. Pangilinan for supporting the team. "Tañamor is now a member of the national training pool where he can get the necessary training and exposure."

Earlier, Froilan Saludar lost to Sunil Of India in the flyweight category, while Jose Vicera lost steam against Rakesh Arvind of India in the 60 kg class.

Ring of Fire up at Araneta Dec. 9

FILIPINO MIXED MARTIAL ARTS fans get a treat when the "Ring of Fire: World Team Challenge" is held Dec. 9 starting 1 p.m. at the Araneta Coliseum.

The event, organized by Platinum Fighting Productions and Proelite.com, will feature world-class MMA fighters—Team Gokor, Team Shamrock, Team Gracie and Team Barnett—in a one-day spectacle billed as the biggest of its kind to be held in the country.

Among the big-name stars seeing action are Jeff Monson, Renato "Babalu' Sobral, Rico Rodriguez, John Marsh, Yuki Kondo and Jorge "Macaco" Patino.

"It will be a marvelous day for mixed martial arts fanatics all over the county," said Ron de la Torre of Platinum Fighting Productions. .

Team Gracie is slated to compete against Team Shamrock while Team Barnett will square off against Team Gokor with the winners advancing to the finals in Macau.

After the first two shows, three more fights will be held in Korea, Japan and back to Manila.

Most of the foreign participants are scheduled to arrive in the country starting Monday.

They are likewise slated to make appearances in local shows to promote the event.

For inquiries, call 9115555 or log on at www.mmafighting.com.

Marlon Bernardino, Contributor

RACING

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Trifecta)—Gainable (5), Raise The Bar (4), Magical Street (2)
Race 2—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Hall A Star (11), Eye Wink (4), Lucky Find (1), When We're Flying (9), Chance For Us (6)
Race 3—Indelible Ink/Anonymous (2), Luna Rossa (1)
Race 4—(Tri)—Karma/King Anthony (5), Boot Legs (4), Lucky Joe (1)
Race 5—Don Enrico (3), Unopposed (1)
Race 6—(Qrt/Tri)—Perfect Choice (7), Lady Line (2), The Boss Daughter (6), Wonders Miss (4)
Race 7—Superamerica (2)
Race 8—(Qrt/Tri)—Gunszup (5), Flying Jolie (6), Zoe's Lass (4), Ger Francis (3)
Race 9—Landed Visa (4), Minsk City (2)
Race 10—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Sharp Cookie (4), Mojito (1), Fujioka (12), Litupwithdiamonds (13), Material World (2)
Race 11—Special Edition (4), Ocean Deep (3)
Race 12—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Virginia (7), Spectacular Play (8), Jazzineth's Blues (3), Vickyval (6), Black Magic/River of Silver (2)
Race 13—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Jay Nicole (4), Raise A Dancer (12), Yao Man (7), Erica's Talent (1), Odyssey (10), Unleashed (6)

Fil-Am keeps Jr pool title

FILIPINO-AMERICAN MARY RAKIN OF the United States beat Tina Buhnen of Germany, 9-2, in the finals to retain her World Junior girls title at the conclusion of the 2007 WPA World Youth 9-Ball for juniors and girls on Friday in Willingen, Germany.

Rakin, who resides in Daly, California, thus became the first back-to-back winner of the event from the US.

It was an amazing comeback for Rakin, who lost her opening match against Denise Wilkinson of New Zealand, 7-4, before sweeping her remaining matches.

En route to the finals, Rakin, who traces her roots to Cavite, trounced Anja Wagner of Germany, 7-6; Hui Ching Yap of Singapore, 7-2; Brina Miller of the United States, 7-2; and Kristina Schagan of Germany, 9-8; and Kim Witzel of Germany, 9-4.

In the boys side, Ko Pin yi dethroned three-time champion Wu Yu lun, 11-7, in an all-Taiwanese Finals.

It was sweet revenge for Ko, who lost to Wu in the last year's finals in Sydney, Australia.

Earlier, Filipino bets Rene Mar David and Mark Aristotle Mendoza failed to advance to the crossover semifinal round.

Marlon Bernardino, Contributor

CHAMPS: CKP168, coached by Adonis Tierra (center, in dark shirt), recently won the Metroball Corporate League title over Polymaster Industrial.

PBA team's woes blamed on coach

IN HUDDLE

Beth Celis

NOW I THINK I know why this PBA player had wanted to talk with me.

Several weeks ago, I got a text message from somebody whose number I did not recognize.

The message sender communicated fluently in English and was courteous. He introduced himself and asked if we could meet for lunch or coffee, because he had something confidential to tell me.

Although I didn't know the cager personally, I did not hesitate to say yes.

For him to seek the help of a stranger, I figured he must have a big problem.

I later found out that it was his agent who gave him my number. He said the cager's problem might be personal since he has been having marital troubles with his wife.

Domestic conflicts don't exactly excite me, but since I had already said yes to the invite, I simply waited for his next message.

Well he did send another text message as promised, but something unexpected came up and we had to cancel the appointment. We tried to set another date, but something came up again.

***

To cut a long story short, we didn't get to meet that week, or the next, or the week after that.

In fact we never got to meet at all. There was always a conflict in his schedule.

After a while, he stopped sending me text messages.

I concluded that he must have solved his problem, whatever it was.

***

I had almost completely forgotten about the cager until lately when I got to talk to a PBA insider who informed me that a rebellion was brewing in this non-performing PBA team which was wallowing somewhere in the bottom of team standings.

The complaints ranged from the coach's alleged lack of knowledge to favoritism and to the sensitive issue of money.

"The team's coach has been tagged as the most OA (overacting) coach in the PBA, because he always complains. Table officials *ang nagbinyag sa kanya nyan*," the insider said.

I was told that the cagers no longer wanted to play and wanted the coach changed.

Then I remembered that the cager who touched base with me some months back belonged to this team.

I was almost sure he had wanted to talk to me about his coach, but hemmed and hawed because he wasn't sure if it was the right thing to do.

***

Apparently, the players had been unable to address their problem all this time. It is bound to blow sky-high one of these days.

I don't know if team management is aware of the issues, but I was told that the manager was recently confined in a hospital because his blood pressure shot up during one of the games.

His coach could not solve or adjust to a situation.

I don't know how true but my source said I should expect coaching movements in this team soon.

***

Since he got married, San Juan Mayor JV Ejercito has hardly set foot at The Arena to watch the games in the Shakey's V-League.

Even now that the championship series has started, I still have to see the good mayor, who used to frequent the games on a regular basis.

Well, he should be making an appearance soon, hopefully.

The finals started last Tuesday with a 5-set classic thriller, the San Sebastian Lady Stags winning over UST, despite tremendous support for the Tigresses from a gallery which had motored all the way from Laguna.

I still have to find out the connection but every UST game, jeeploads upon jeeploads of UST fans from Laguna come to watch and cheer for the Tigresses.

I'm told that these fans have made advance ticket reservations for Game 2 today, to make sure they get the best seats in the house.

They're hoping UST wins today to forge a sudden-death knockout in Game 3.

Toyota nails q'final bonus

GAMES DEC. 18 *(The Arena)*
2 p.m.—Toyota Balintawak vs Mail and More
4 p.m.—San Mig Coffee vs Pharex

By Jasmine W. Payo

AFTER MISSING ON ITS FIRST try, Toyota Balintawak finally nailed the PBL quarterfinal bonus by pummeling Mail and More, 77-68, in a playoff match in the V-Go Extreme Energy Drink Cup yesterday at The Arena in San Juan.

JV Casio and Cholo Villanueva joined hands in a scoring surge by the Road Kings in the final four minutes that defused the Comets' comeback from a 10-point deficit.

Aside from praising the two De La Salle stalwarts, coach Ariel Vanguardia commended his Road Kings' tenacity just two days after a surprise blowout loss to tailender Bacchus, 71-51, in their first shot at the twice-to-beat privilege.

"Our Bacchus game was terrible, we were caught flat," said Vanguardia. "I told the boys it will be a test of character and they responded. We had a good talk in practice. They promised to bounce back."

POCHOLO Villanueva of Toyota tries an armlock on Nestor David of Mail and More as they battle for position in a rebound play. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Casio and Villanueva, who shared the Finals MVP honors in La Salle's recent UAAP championship run, combined for seven points in a two-minute stretch that gave the Road Kings a 75-68 buffer after the Comets had moved within 66-68.

With the incentive secure, the Road Kings will try to beat the Comets anew in their 2 p.m. quarterfinal match on Dec. 18 at The Arena in San Juan.

San Mig Coffee also needs to win just once versus Pharex to advance to the semifinals in the other 4 p.m. pairing.

The quarterfinal winners will go up against unbeaten Hapee and Harbour Centre, the two league-leaders who clinched outright Final Four berths.

Jonathan Aldave shot 10 of his 14 points in a second-quarter run, while center James Sena added 13 markers and two blocks for the Road Kings.

With Sena and Villanueva still hot after the break, the Road Kings padded their 38-33 halftime lead to 52-47 late in the third period.

A 6-0 run early in the fourth gave the Road Kings their first double-digit advantage, 68-58, before the Comets responded with eight straight points including a Khiel Misa triple and a Nestor David three-point play.

But Casio's three-pointer at the 4:52 mark shifted the momentum back to the Road Kings,71-66. Back-to-back jumpers by Villanueva then gave the Road Kings a 75-68 cushion heading into the final two minutes.

The scores:

TOYOTA BALINTAWAK 77—Aldave 14, Sena 13, Villanueva 11, Faundo 8, Caslo 7, Sta. Maria 6, Rodriguez 6, Jaime 4, Dedicatoria 3, Guerrero 3, Alcaraz 2, Cole 0, Jazul 0.

MAIL AND MORE 68—David 12, Ballesteros 11, Misa 10, Santos 8, Arellano 8, Gregorio 6, Baracael 6, Canlas 3, White 2, Bonus 2, Co 0, Masbang 0, Bauzon 0.

Quarters: 13-17, 38-33, 62-54, 77-68

Marikina slips past Forward Taguig IX

GAMES TODAY *(Rizal Baseball Stadium)*
9 a.m.—Marikina vs Cebu
1 p.m.—Dumaguete vs Taguig

MARIKINA NIPPED FORWARD TAGUIG, 8-7, and needs just one more win to clinch a twice-to-beat edge in the playoffs for the second finals berth after yesterday's Baseball Philippines' Series 2 playdate at the Rizal Baseball Stadium.

Marikina must beat Cebu, which already topped the Southern Conference with a 6-3 slate, today to clinch the playoff advantage against defending champion Makati. The playoffs winner then takes on Northern Conference champion Manila in the semifinal.

The winners of the division playoffs must beat the division champions twice to make the best-of-three championship series.

A one-run double at the bottom of the seventh by shortstop John Apura turned out to be the winning run for the Shoemakers, who retained second spot in the Northern Conference at 5-4.

Manila had a five-run binge on top of the 13th inning to win, 8-3, also against Taguig. The match was a continuation of a postponed game two weeks ago. *Romina S. Austria*

Lady Stags eye Shakey's breakthrough crown

GAMES TODAY *(The Arena)*
2 p.m.—Ateneo vs Adamson
4 p.m.—SSC vs Santo Tomas

UNTIL SAN SEBASTIAN COLLEGE is actually holding the championship trophy, coach Roger Gorayeb refuses to believe the Shakey's V-League women's volleyball second conference title series is over.

The Lady Stags go for their first V-League crown with a two-game sweep of the University of Santo Tomas Tigresses starting at 5 p.m. at The Arena after the league hands out the individual awards.

Ateneo seeks third place against Adamson University at 3 p.m.

If Adamson manages to level its own best-of-three series but San Sebastian ends the title fight, the quotient system will be used to determine the bronze medal winner.

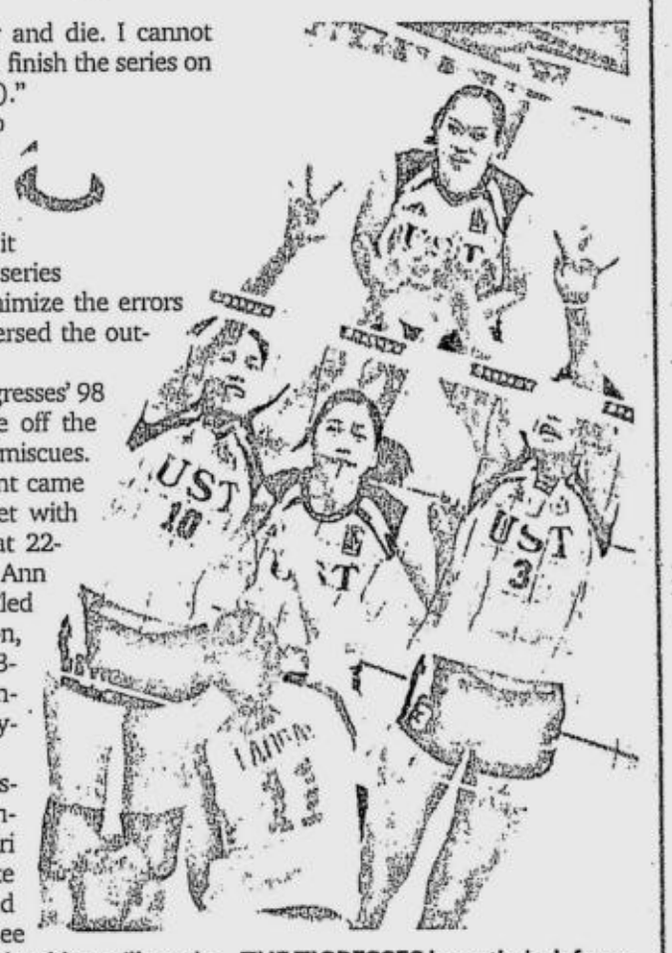
The Lady Stags won Game One last Friday, 25-16, 25-19, 17-25, 23-25, 15-13, and are on the verge of winning their first crown after two consecutive runner-up finishes.

"We all know what a team like UST can do," said Gorayeb, also the architect of the Lady Stags' NCAA grand slam. "We do not expect them to just roll over and die. I cannot even say we will finish the series on Sunday (tonight)."

But Gorayeb promised that his team will display the same intensity it showed in the series opener and minimize the errors that almost reversed the outcome.

Out of the Tigresses' 98 points, 43 came off the Lady Stags' miscues. One crucial point came in the fourth set with the score tied at 22-all. Laurence Ann Latigay was called for a net violation, giving UST a 23-22 lead and eventually, the set-tying win, 25-23.

San Sebastian's Thai import Jaroensri Bualee, despite being bothered by a sore knee and a hurting shoulder, still made 25 points. *Romina S. Austria*



THE TIGRESSES hope their defense will pull them through. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Alcantara seeks 2 Phinma titles today

By Jasmine W. Payo

FILIPINO BET FRANCIS CASEY Alcantara shoots for a tournament sweep after clinching championship berths in the boys' singles and doubles of the Phinma International Junior Circuit Week 1 yesterday at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

Alcantara arranged a singles showdown versus Russian qualifier Artem Ilyushin today after disposing of Australian Sean White, 6-4, 6-3, in the semifinal round.

The promising 15-year-old will team up with another Australian, James Duckworth, in their doubles finals match against Taiwanese pair Huang Liang-chi and Li Chieh-lin.

"The competition is easier now compared to last year," said Alcantara, seeded second in the tournament and ranked 204th in the world.

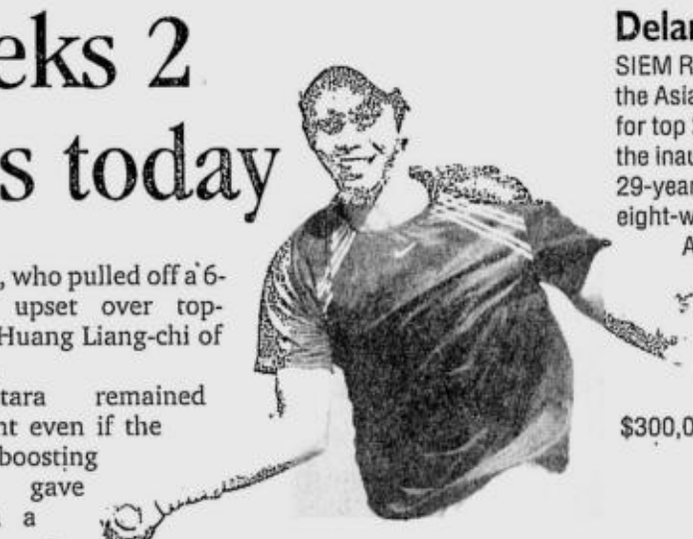
Alcantara banked on his groundstrokes to turn back No. 768 White and advance against Ilyushin, who pulled off a 6-2, 6-3 upset over top-ranked Huang Liang-chi of Taiwan.

Alcantara remained confident even if the morale-boosting victory gave Ilyushin a strong chance to redeem himself from last year's first-round defeat to young Filipino star Kyle Dandan.

In the doubles semifinals, Alcantara and Duckworth overpowered Singapore's Leong Chee-jun and Italy's Luca Masiello for a 6-3, 6-1 victory.

Their finals foes, Huang and Li, outlasted Singapore's Min-Sylvester Wee and Philippine bet Pablo Olivarez II, 6-3, 3-6, 7-6 (5).

Meanwhile, Romania's Bianca Hincu and Australia's Cody Morris set up a title match in the girls' singles.



FRANCIS Casey Alcantara prepares to fire a forehand to Australia Sean White in their semifinal duel yesterday. RYAN LIM

Delariarte stays in top 20

SIEM REAP, CAMBODIA—FLASHING HIS STRONGEST FORM IN the Asian Tour this year, Jerome Delariarte stayed in contention for top 20 finish by firing a two-under-par 70 in the third round of the inaugural Johnnie Walker Cambodian Open on Saturday. The 29-year-old from Quezon City, who turned pro in 2004, was in an eight-way tie for 15th place at 4-under 212, nine strokes behind Adam Groom of Australia who grabbed the solo lead by one over American Bryan Saltus with a 70 for 203.

Mars Pucay shot a 69 after earlier rounds of 74-72 and moved up to a deadlock for 33rd place at 215 while Gerald Rosales carded a 73 and stood at 219 going into the final round of the $300,000 event. *Asian Tour News*

Thais match Filipinos' passion

From page A27

"It's part of my job description—to feel the pressure," Romero told the INQUIRER Saturday morning in an overseas interview. "But modesty aside, I feel that this (basketball gold) is ours already.

"The boys have been working hard and are giving it their all," he added. "The only thing I see which could prevent us from winning (the gold medal) is if the officiating turns so bad against us."

Romero's coaching staff headed by Junnel Baculi has finally finished tinkering with the composition of the team, the latest additions being Fil-American Gabe Norwood of Hapee in the PBL, and several collegiate standouts.

Thailand will try to win the football championship for the eighth straight edition, while the Filipino squad that will come over will try not to become just the third team to lose the gold medal in SEAG history.

Along with Norwood, two-time PBL MVP Jason Castro, ex-Ateneo hotshot Chris Tiu and reigning UAAP MVP Jervy Cruz will lead the team. *Musong R. Castillo*

Skeet...

From page A27

"I really felt bad (on Friday) because I prepared hard for the rapid fire and there was no human error on my part," added Padilla. "My equipment failed me, it all boils down to that."

Carolino Gonzales, the former SEAG air pistol king who admitted to joining the center fire event only for the Philippines to be able to assemble a team, fired 555 and finished 13th.

Robert Donalvo was 14th with a 543 total even as Vietnam ran away with the team gold.

"The team has been performing well," Pol Rosario, father and coach of Brian, told the INQUIRER during a break in practice of the skeet team Saturday. "We have a strong chance because we have beaten (the other countries in the field) previously."

Prior to coming over, the Filipinos won the Southeast Asian Shooting Association (Seasa) gold medal over Thailand and Malaysia in Malaysia, with Rosario bagging the bronze medal.

The Thais and the Malaysians, the elder Rosario said, loom as the chief threats for a Philippine repeat in the event, and Malaysians Ricky To and Richard Chong as the major challengers to his son's throne.

De Guzman, a 26-year-old from Camarines Norte, will be seeing action in her first Games and will actually be shooting for the only gold medal that the Philippines has a shot at Saturday.

Sunday SPORTS

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Celtics hold off Heat; Sonics triumph

MIAMI—PAUL PIERCE SCORED 18 of his 27 points in the first quarter to put Boston on course for a 95-85 win over Miami on Friday.

Kevin Garnett added 23 and the NBA-leading Celtics wasted most of a 28-point lead before winning.

The Celtics prevailed despite missing 12 of 13 shots over an 8-1/2 minute span late in the game—a drought that allowed Miami to make a comeback bid.

The Heat drew within seven points with 3:56 left, but the margin didn't get any smaller, and Miami lost for the 11th time in 15 games this season.

Miami opens a six-game road trip Sunday in Denver.

In Phoenix, Raja Bell had a season-high 20 points and the Suns beat the Orlando Magic for the second time this season, 110-106.

The Suns snapped a two-game skid.

In Denver, Allen Iverson scored 26 points to help the Nuggets snap a three-game skid with a 123-107 rout of the Los Angeles Clippers.

Carmelo Anthony added 24 points for the Nuggets.

The Clippers have now dropped six of their last seven games.

Seattle rookie shines

In Seattle, Kevin Durant scored a career-high 35 points and the SuperSonics became the final NBA team to win at home this season by nipping the Indiana Pacers, 95-93.

Seattle was 0-7 at home and had lost 11 straight home games dating to last season. Seattle snapped a six-game skid and avoided the worst 17-game start in franchise history.

Triple double

In Salt Lake City, Andrei Kirilenko had his third career triple-double to help Utah overcome injuries to two starters and crush the Los Angeles Lakers, 120-96.

Deron Williams scored a career-high 35 points for the Jazz, who won without leading scorer Carlos Boozer (ankle) and center Mehmet Okur (back spasms).

In Minneapolis, Manu Ginobili scored a season-high 31 points and San Antonio rallied for a 106-91 victory that handed Minnesota its 12th loss in 14 games.

The Spurs didn't lead until early in the fourth quarter.

The Wolves built their biggest lead, 80-66, before the Spurs went on a 14-0 run spanning the third and fourth quarters. Minnesota didn't fall behind until 9:05 remaining.

In Dallas, Josh Howard had 23 points and a season-high 14 rebounds, and the Mavericks overcame a weak performance by Dirk Nowitzki to beat the Portland Trail Blazers, 91-80.

The Mavericks extended their home winning streak against the Blazers to nine games.

In Philadelphia, Samuel Dalembert had 19 points and 11 rebounds, and the 76ers snapped a two-game losing streak at home and a four-game skid against Washington via an 85-84 thriller over the Wizards.

Andre Miller scored 18 points for the Sixers.

Washington fell to 7-9.

In New York, Jamal Crawford made the go-ahead basket with 28 seconds left, and the Knicks erased a 17-point deficit to beat the Milwaukee Bucks, 91-88.

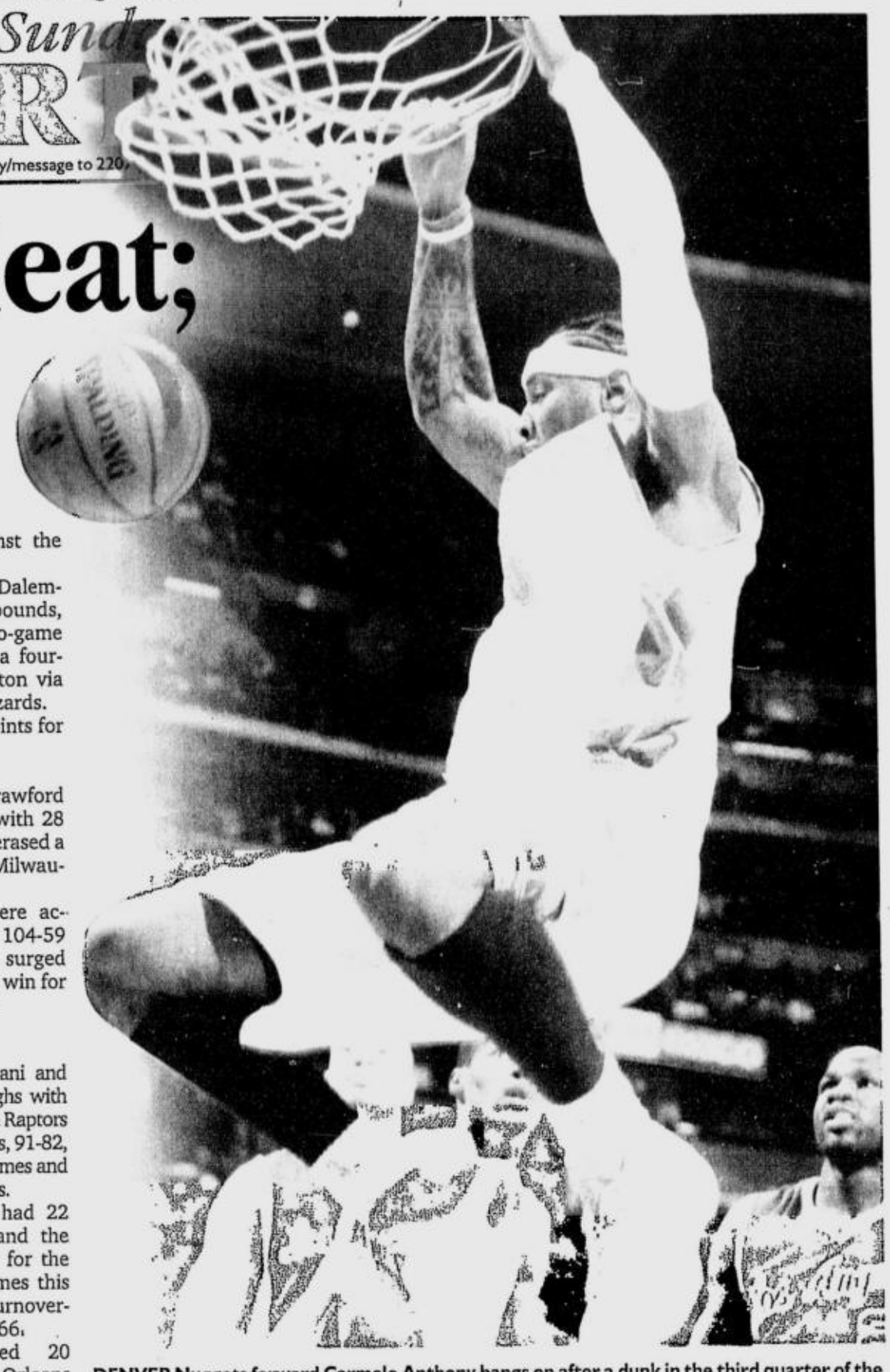
One night after they were accused of quitting during a 104-59 loss in Boston, the Knicks surged back in the fourth quarter to win for the third time in four games.

Career-highs

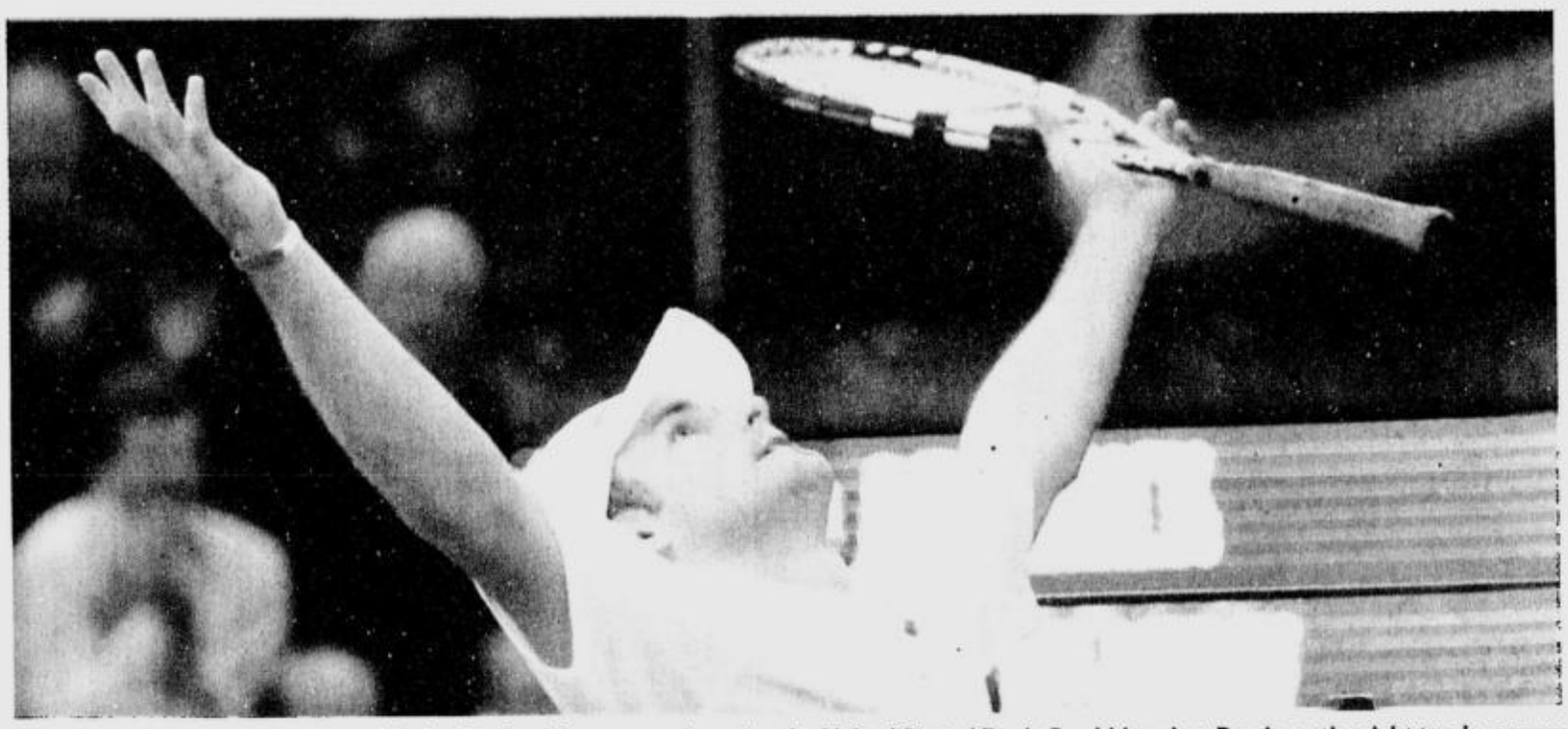
In Toronto, Andrea Bargnani and Carlos Delfino had career highs with 26 and 24 points each, and the Raptors tripped the Cleveland Cavaliers, 91-82, in a game that stars LeBron James and Chris Bosh missed with injuries.

In Atlanta, David West had 22 points and 17 rebounds and the New Orleans Hornets won for the eighth time in 10 road games this season, the beating turnover-plagued Atlanta Hawks, 92-66.

The Hawks committed 20 turnovers, which New Orleans turned into 22 points. *AP*



DENVER Nuggets forward Carmelo Anthony hangs on after a dunk in the third quarter of the Nuggets' 123-107 victory over the Los Angeles Clippers. AP



ANDY Roddick celebrates after whipping Dmitry Tursunov and putting the United States' Davis Cup bid against Russia on the right track. REUTERS

DAVIS CUP

Roddick, Blake hand US 2-0 cushion

PORTLAND, OREGON—EVEN WHEN James Blake was struggling in his Davis Cup match, he knew his teammates were behind him.

Blake fed off their support and held off feisty Mikhail Youzhny, 6-3, 7-6 (4), 6-7 (3), 7-6 (3), Friday night to give the United States a 2-0 lead over Russia in the Davis Cup final.

"They've believed in me the whole year, so I wanted to prove them right, to be honest," Blake said of the US team. "They've had confidence in me every time."

Blake's victory got the US within one win of its first Davis Cup title since 1995. Earlier, Andy Roddick cruised past Dmitry Tursunov, 6-4, 6-4, 6-2, in the opening match on the hard court at Memorial Coliseum.

Bob and Mike Bryan can wrap it up for the US by winning their doubles match against Russia's Nikolay Davydenko and Igor Andreev on Saturday.

The crowd was on its feet when Blake went ahead in the final tiebreaker and Youzhny hit into the net for the US victory.

Blake, ranked 13th in the world, took a 5-2 first-set lead in a game that featured him making a spectacular return, running back to the baseline and hitting backward over his head. After the point Blake pumped his fists and Roddick joined the spectators in wild cheers.

But Blake appeared to tire in the second set, and 19th-ranked Youzhny went up 4-3. Blake talked out loud to himself, saying "C'mon, c'mon."

Blake recovered to win the second set, but ran into trouble again in the third, when Youzhny won the tiebreaker.

It was US captain Patrick McEnroe and his teammates who pulled him through.

BLAKE: Heads-up play REUTERS

"Every time I came over I saw Patrick with a fist pump saying, 'Keep doing what you're doing,' That's the best feeling," Blake said. "That's the confidence I talked about that my teammates have, that if I play my game I'm going to give myself the best chance to win."

The marathon match, which Blake called the biggest win of his career so far, lasted 3 hours, 28 minutes.

Roddick threw his hands up in triumph after Tursunov's final return landed long in the first match. Roddick, ranked No. 6 in the world, improved to 6-0 in Davis Cup play this year.

"It's kind of like 'so close but so far away.' There's no celebration," he said. "It's one match. The celebration will be saved for when we win, if we win."

Roddick took the first set after he hit an 146-mph serve that No. 34 Tursunov returned long, ending a game that went to deuce four times. Roddick let out a growl after holding serve, and the US fans roared their approval.

Roddick broke Tursunov early in the second set and again to start the third. While he high-fived McEnroe, Tursunov threw up his hands in disgust.

"If there are 12-and-a-half thousand people behind you and you can use them to help you win a tennis match, you would be stupid not to, right?" Roddick said. "Other than cheating, I'll do anything I can to win."

Roddick had 25 aces in the match, which lasted 1 hour, 53 minutes. Tursunov had eight aces.

"I wasn't playing my game," Tursunov said. "I was playing way too passive. I was playing not to miss."

The best-of-five final is a culmination of a year's worth of international competition.

The once-dominant United States has 31 Davis Cup titles but none in 12 years, the longest span without an American victory. Pete Sampras last led the team to victory over Russia on clay in Moscow in 1995.

Russia's captain Shamil Tarpischev pulled a surprise at the draw, leaving fourth-ranked Davydenko out of the singles matches—setting up the first match between Roddick and Tursunov.

Tarpischev didn't say whether he'd stay with Davydenko and Andreev as his doubles team on Saturday. *AP*

'Super Dan' elated after routing Taufik

HONG KONG—WORLD NO. 1 Lin Dan could not hide his delight after crushing his arch-rival, Olympic champion Taufik Hidayat, in the Hong Kong Open quarterfinals.

While Hidayat sat slumped in disbelief at the back of the court, a jubilant "Super Dan" held court with reporters and posed for photographs with fans.

"This was one of my best games," beamed the Chinese star. "I haven't been in such good touch since I won the world championship.

"I had a great feeling, I was really into the game. I'm not even tired because I'm so excited."

Lin flew to a one-game lead and then clawed back from a seven-point deficit in the second to win, 21-12, 21-14, underlining his dominance of the unpredictable Indonesian.

Hidayat, now ranked sixth, has not beaten the confident Chinese since the 2005 world championship final and has a 3-6 record in their official head-to-heads.

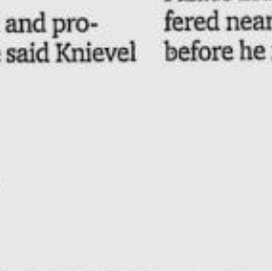
Apart from berating one line judge, it was a subdued performance from the two-time Asian Games champion, who stormed out of last year's match against Lin to protest a disputed call.

That was one of a long line of shocking incidents involving badminton's bad boy, including attacking a fan in 2001, an alleged carpark brawl in 2004 and a furious verbal spat with Lin last December.

Hidayat missed much of last season with injury and has won only the Asian championships this year. He appeared here, mainly to retain his top-eight seeding, a mellower character after the birth of his first child in August. *AFP*

Daredevil Evel Knievel dies at 69

CLEARWATER, Florida—Evel Knievel, the hard-living motorcycle daredevil, whose bone-breaking, rocket-powered jumps and stunts made him an international icon in the 1970s, died Friday. He was 69.



KNIEVEL AP

He had been in failing health for years, suffering from diabetes and pulmonary fibrosis, an incurable condition that scarred his lungs. He had undergone a liver transplant in 1999 after nearly dying of hepatitis C, likely contracted through a blood transfusion after one of his many spills. He also suffered two strokes in recent years.

Longtime friend and promoter Billy Rundle said Knievel had trouble breathing at his Clearwater condominium and died before an ambulance could get him to a hospital.

"It's been coming for years, but you just don't expect it. Superman just doesn't die, right?" said Rundle.

Knievel's son Kelly, 47, said he had visited his father in Clearwater for Thanksgiving.

Immortalized in the Washington's Smithsonian Institution as "America's Legendary Daredevil," Knievel was best known for a failed attempt to jump an Idaho canyon on a rocket-powered cycle and a spectacular crash at Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas. He suffered nearly 40 broken bones before he retired in 1980. *AP*

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Website: www.inquirer.net/business

Sunday BIZ

Business Features Editor **Margie Quimpo-Espino**

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THE FRI 1A

Making drugs at arm's length desire

By Margie Quimpo-Espino

BENJAMIN I. LIUson, owner of the Pacific Insular Co. Inc., a wholesaler of generics medicine, had been taking it easy for the past nine years after a triple heart bypass operation forced him to slow down.

His three daughters, who now run the 50-year-old company he inherited from his adoptive parents, bring home his paperworks in the evening and bring these back to the office in the morning. He goes to the office once a week "just to make sure people still remember me—as they may not allow me in."

This has been his routine for the past eight years, spending four-hour lunches with friends, walking for half an hour daily and enjoying his easy life.

But these days, a new venture is preoccupying Liuson's time. And his life is slowly becoming hectic again.

He says an ad in the INQUIRER changed his life. It was an ad of Francorp, an international franchising consultancy firm, that called on businesses, which have had profitable operations for three years and wanted to do good for others, to attend a seminar on franchising.

Liuson attended the seminar in January 2007. By April, the 58-year-old had his first franchisee for The Generics Pharmacy, a drugstore that sells generics or unbranded medicine.

Offered just eight months ago, The Pharmacy now has 27 stores and Liuson says the target is to have 100 stores by the middle of next year.

Liuson conducts the franchising seminars for The Generics Pharmacy. It is the first generics retail pharmacy to franchise in the country.

The name is inspired by the names of the shops he sees in malls—The Body Shop, The Face Shop, The Shoe Shop. So he thought, why not The Generics Pharmacy.

He offers four schemes for franchising that require capital outlay from P227,000 to P613,000.

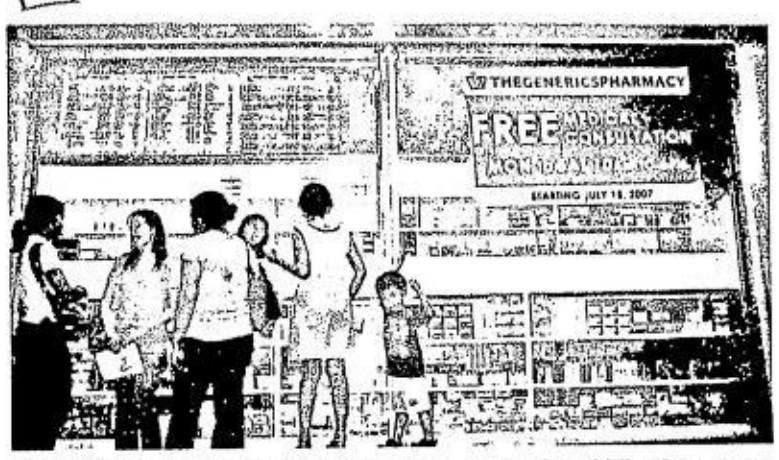
Included in each of the four schemes is a franchising fee of P110,000. Medicine are sold on a consignment basis and soon-to-expire medicine can be returned.

According to Liuson, his main goal for the franchising business is to help expand and extend the reach of generics medicine to the poor. Which is why he says the requirement for the locations of his drugstores are these should be near marketplaces and near public transportation terminals.

On top of the franchising fee, the company gets royalty of one percent of gross total sales.

Liuson has been active with his church and says he shares part of his wealth to it.

BENJAMIN I. Liuson



WITH 27 stores, the target is to have 100 stores by the middle of next year.

Interesting story

The Chinese-Filipino has an interesting story. He was adopted by an uncle who did not have children. He and his twin were the sixth and seventh children of his biological parents but he was the only one adopted. That fact was never hidden from him and as typical among Chinese families he regularly saw his biological parents and siblings. His parents came from Xiamen, China and went to Manila in 1940. When his mother was pregnant with him and his brother, they had to go to Taiwan for business and passed by Hong Kong en route to Manila. It was in Hong Kong that his mother gave birth to him and his twin.

While in high school, he helped in his eldest brother's business—an eyeglass and picture frame shop. And after finishing Business Administration from the University of the East he was asked to help in the pharmaceutical business.

When Martial Law was declared in 1972, his adoptive parents' fortune changed after betting on the wrong political candidate.

He recalls that they had to sell their house in Forbes Park and rent in San Lorenzo Village.

Partly because of the political

MAKING/B2

The Generics Pharmacy franchising scheme

1. New pharmacy
Area: 15 square meter
Capital: P388,000
Monthly expenses: P40,000
Break-even sales per day: P4,000

2. Inside existing medical clinics and hospitals
Area: 15 sq. m.
Capital: P288,000
Monthly expenses: P25,000
Break-even sales per day: P2,560

3. Inside existing stores
Area: 15 sq. m.
Capital: P227,000
Monthly expenses: P16,000
Break-even sales per day: P1,600

4. New pharmacy with medical clinic
Area: 30 sq. m.
Capital : P613,000
Monthly expenses: P 85,000
Break-even sales per day: P8,600

Making drugs ...

From page B1

situation and the changed fortunes of his adoptive parents he was sent with his biological parents to Brazil.

The South American country was chosen because his biological father had a friend there. Liuson's family put up three gas stations because he says that was the only business that traversed the language barrier. Brazilians speak Portugese.

In 1974, however he returned to Manila when his adoptive father passed away. He then took over the family business.

Liuson's adoptive father acquired Pacific from Germans in 1959. Initially the company was importing and wholesaling pharmaceutical products from Europe. During the economic crisis of the early '80s when there was a shortage of dollars for imports, the company started sourcing medicine from local makers. In 1989, after the Generics Act was passed, the company also ventured into selling generics medicine.

Pacific serves 3,000 customers nationwide that include hospitals, doctors' clinics and drugstores.

Liuson says some of the hospitals they sold to would refer patients to them saying they sell cheap medicine. However, he says they had to turn away these patients as they were wholesalers.

But in 2001, the company went into retail pharmacy operations. But it was only early this year that the decision to go into franchising was reached.

What the Pharmacy sells are some 150 generics medicine that Liuson says represent 85 percent of the common medicine bought by Filipinos. These include medicine for high blood, cholesterol, diabetes, colds, asthma, vitamins and food supplements. They also sell antibiotics and some ampules and vials. These come from China, India, Singapore and Korea and some local makers.

One strategy he uses to make sure he always gets the new generics drugs is to pay for cash for his purchases. He says this way he is always the priority of suppliers as others ask for a credit line.

Liuson says he cannot beat Mercury Drug, the country's largest drugstore chain.

"Mercury is a super giant that sells 90-percent branded medicine. The generics market is only 10 percent. We will not touch branded medicine [the list of medicine of Generics Pharmacy, however, includes a portion on 'Branded']."

And while Mercury's marketing line is "*Nakasisiguro gamot ay laging bago;*" Generics' tag line is "*Mabisa na, matipid pa.*"

'Pinangat' traders keep Albay town o

By Ephraim Aguilar
Inquirer Southern Luzon

CAMALIG, ALBAY—IF HUGE FAST-food chains have "drive-through" outlets, this town has its own version.

But instead of hamburgers and fried chicken, it sells the town's famous native delicacy—the *pinangat*.

Lurking in profitable corners of this town are stores along the main highway, where travelers passing by could simply stop and buy pinangat.

Pinangat—Camalig, Albay's town product—is a famous native vegetable cuisine cooked in coconut milk mixed with select spices.

Its main ingredient is the taro leaves, which is *gabi* in Filipino and *natong* in Bicol.

Rolando Nicerio, 38, is one of those entrepreneurs who make pinangat more than just a household delicacy. He creates a product even tourists can enjoy.

He is the owner of the thriving Dad's Special Pinangat that he put up in 1999.

Nicerio says he started cooking pinangat when he was 12.

He lived in his aunt's house, who was a home economics teacher and, at that time, a maker and seller of pinangat.

"I learned to cook pinangat by helping my aunt prepare the orders. At age 12, I could already cook pinangat alone," Nicerio says.

A management graduate, Nicerio told himself after finishing college that he wanted to put up his own business since searching for employment was like a wild goose chase.

PINANGAT is a famous native vegetable cuisine cooked in coconut milk mixed with select spices.

Nicerio did not have second thoughts that it was pinangat-making that could earn him a living since it was a craft that he knew very well.

He was also encouraged by the cheap raw materials that would not require him a very big capital.

In 1999, the year he started his business, the ingredients were very cheap, he says.

Coconut was only P2 to P3 per piece while taro leaves cost only P80 per sack.

He could cook 70 to 80 pieces of pinangat from a budget of P500 and earn more than P1,000 in return.

The pinangat was then being sold at P25 per piece.

"I started cooking 30 to 50 pieces of pinangat and sold it in my house. After a week, I was making around a hundred pieces of pinangat every day," Nicero says.

ROLANDO Nicerio, owner of Dad's Special Pinangat in Camalig, Albay

Now, after storms ravaged coconut plantations in Bicol late last year, a piece of coconut costs P12 to P15.

Nicerio says he only used coconut from Bicol for his pinangat since this variety produces a sweeter milk.

Meanwhile, a sack of taro leaves now costs P480. The pinangat is now being sold at P30 per piece.

Nicerio would get coconut from his relatives who planted coconut at the foot of Mayon Volcano.

Quality control

Nicerio says what makes his pinangat special is that he cooks it himself.

He says cooking pinangat is a meticulous craft and that he wants to make sure his product is consistently good.

There are two kinds of pinangat traders in Camalig—those who cook their products themselves and those who only sell what they have bought from pinangat-makers in the villages.

Nicerio says if the trader sells only what he cooks, he has easier control of the product's quality and sanitation.

The first thing he does in cooking pinangat is sort the gabi leaves by choosing only the good ones.

He says the good variety of gabi for pinangat-making are the soft ones, those that grow along streams of fresh water.

Pinangat's other ingredients are garlic, ginger and pepper.

Nicerio also adds shrimp, chicken, pork, or dried fish—depending on the choice of the customers.

Pinangat is sold either frozen or fresh, spicy or classic.

Nicerio cooks pinangat in firewood because, he says, it gives a better and more inviting smell for his pinangat.

Improved packaging

Nicerio says packaging evolved through the years since pinangat was becoming widely recognized as a town product.

Before, he says, customers would not mind if the pinangat was wrapped in a plastic bag. But now, since more tourists buy pinangat, they have to wrap it in a foil, then in a plastic or styrofoam.

Nicerio, who is also president of the newly formed Pinangat-Makers' Association, says the Department of Trade and Industry in Albay has been helping them improve the packaging of the town product.

The DTI gave the association for free 35,000 designed boxes labeled "Camalig Pinangat."

It also bears "nutrition facts" in the glossy packaging, which made the local cuisine marketable even in malls and more presentable as gifts or *pasalubong*.

However, the new packaging increased the price of pinangat since each box would cost P7.

Early traditions

There are no exact accounts in Bicol history that show the origin of pinangat.

However, Legazpi City Museum curator Dr. Erlinda Gonzales-Belleza says abundance of taro leaves had been depicted in the famous Bicolano epic "Ibalong."

There was a scene in the epic wherein a wild boar attacked the "*linza*" plantation of folkloric hero Baltog, who was believed to be first settler in the land.

The line goes: "To Bicol (Baltog) came pursuing a fierce wild boar, which by-night-time destroyed his linza plantation."

Linza is a root crop from the taro plant, Belleza says.

Nicerio says pinangat was originally cooked as what is presently known as *laing* in earthen pots natively called *koron* or *palayok* in Filipino.

Laing is a simple dish of taro leaves cooked in spices and coconut milk mixed with meat or seafood.

In the passing of time, Nicerio said, the natives thought of improving the way the food is garnished to make it more presentable to visitors.

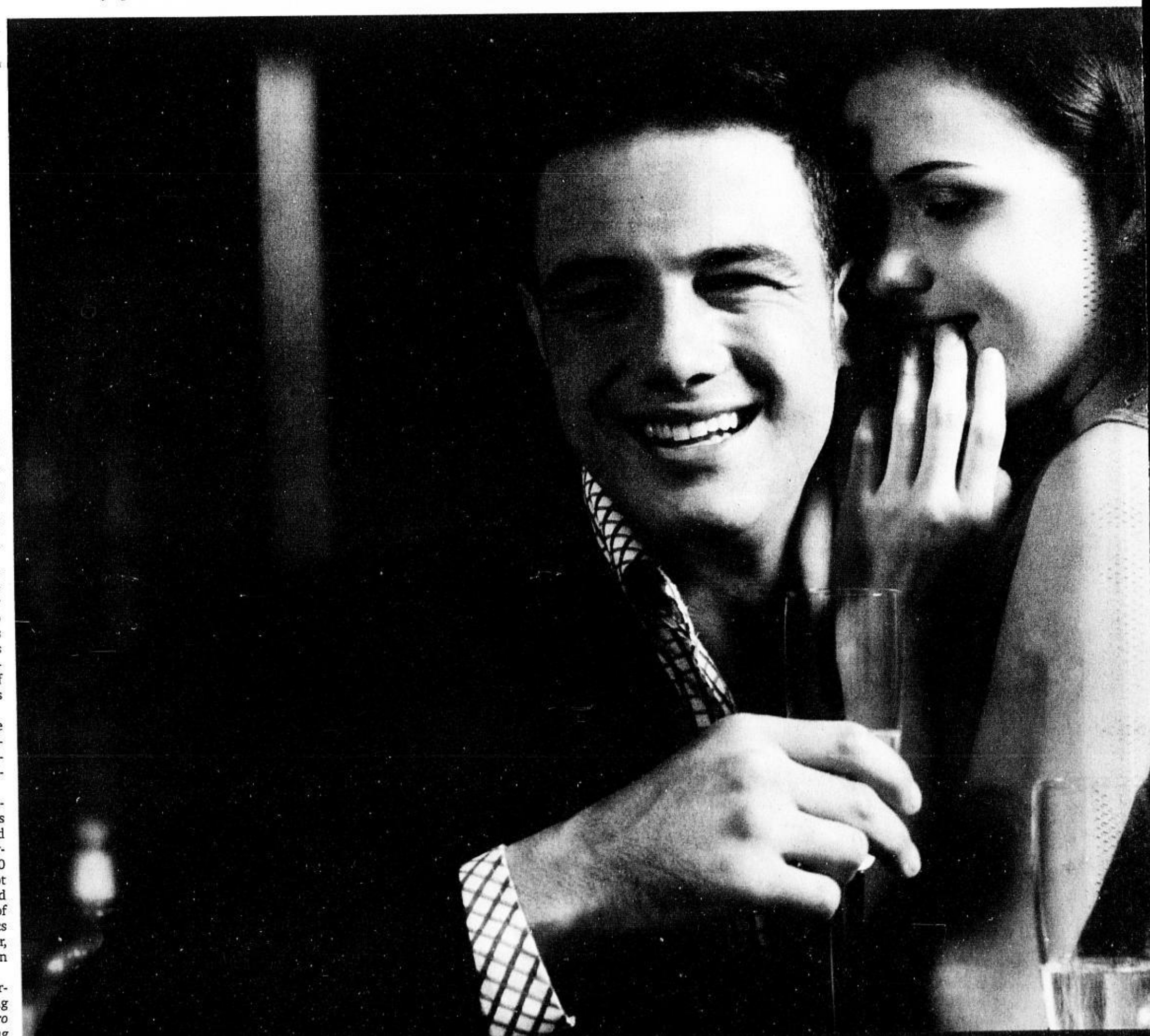
"The natives learned to wrap the mixture in gabi leaves and tied it with dried coconut leaves," Nicerio says.

The pinangat has also been known to have medicinal benefits since the ingredients are herbs, says Nicerio. Every serving is Vitamin A-rich and has a good patronage among Chinese buyers.

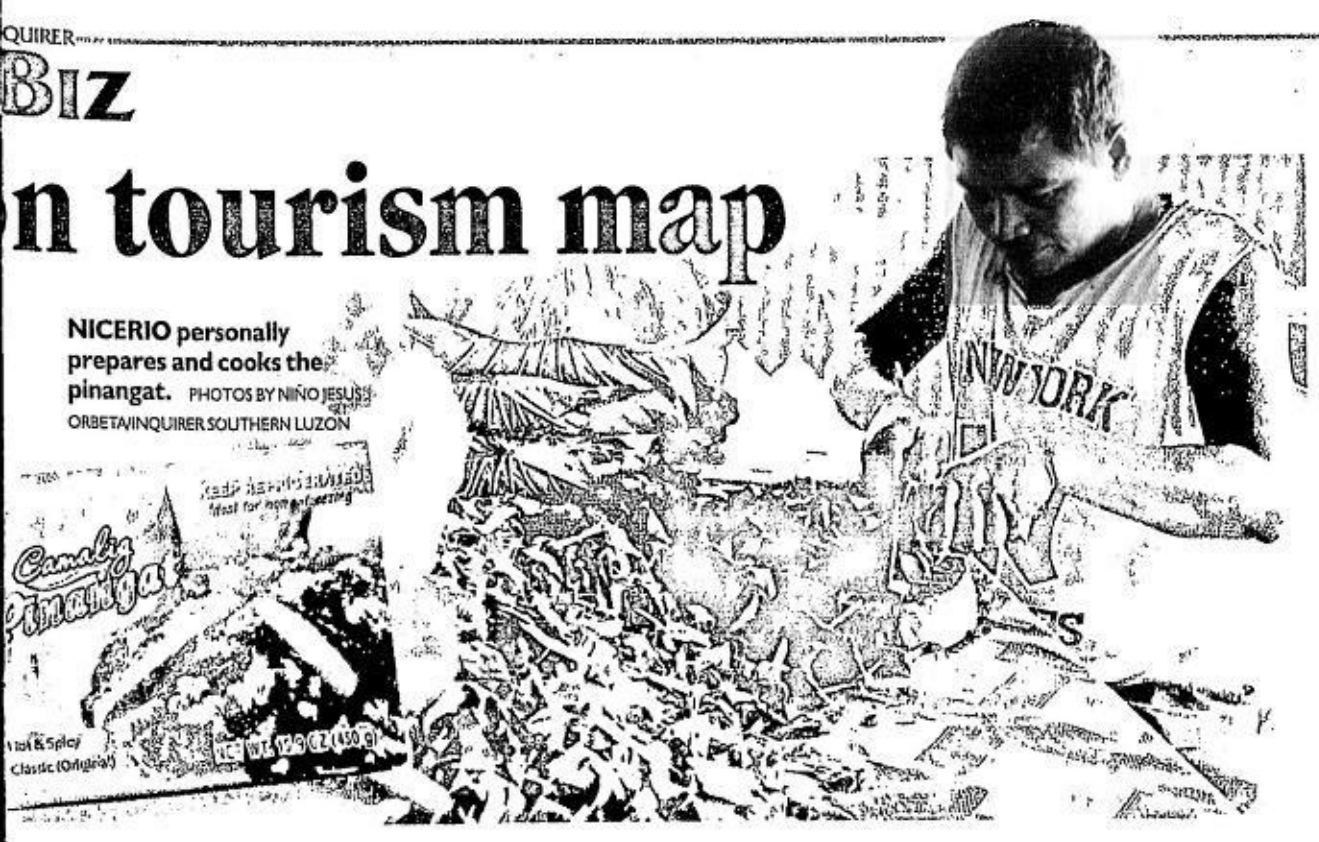
Export potentials

Nicerio says pinangat is saleable since it is a delicacy unique to their town. It is easy to market locally since the industry is already well-known.

"Buyers from other places would troop to Camalig only for our pinangat," he says in



n tourism map



NICERIO personally prepares and cooks the pinangat. PHOTOS BY NIÑO JESUS ORBETA/INQUIRER SOUTHERN LUZON

the vernacular.

Nicerio says he also saw great export potentials in the pinangat. He says the pinangat can keep long for as long as it is kept frozen.

Frozen pinangat is also served as a sandwich spread.

Sales peak from November to June.

He says most of his buyers are people visiting Bicol during the Christmas and summer seasons.

During the week, there are more buyers on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays.

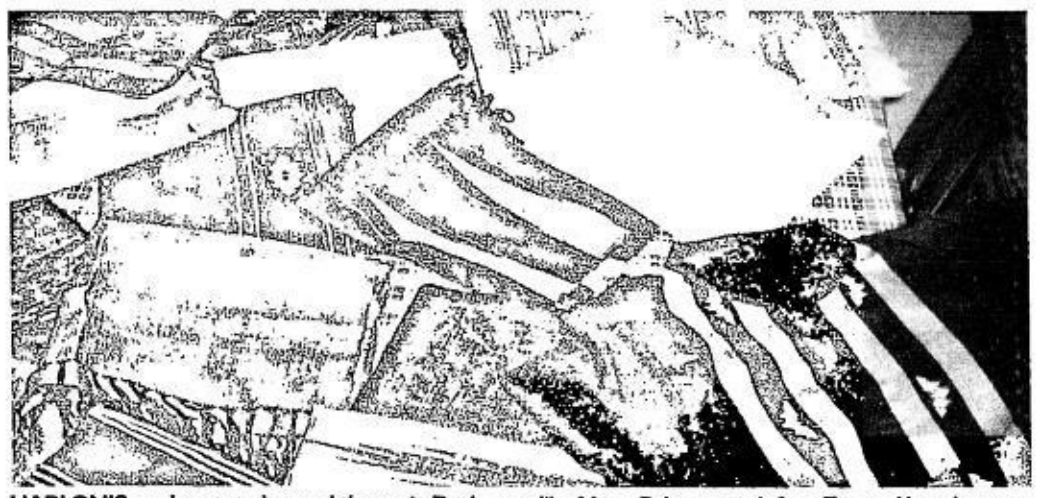
Nicerio, who would soon open a restaurant in Camalig, also accepts orders from Metro Manila.

The payment is done through money transfer and the pinangat is delivered a day after the order is placed.

Dad's Special Pinangat also sells bottled Bicol Express—chilies and other ingredients cooked in coconut milk—for P75 each.

Camalig is a developing agricultural town of around 13,000 hectares east of Daraga, Albay at the southern part of Mayon Volcano.

For inquiries: 0916-8463923



HABLON'S use has gone beyond the *tapis*. Designers, like Nono Palmos, use it for office and beach wear.

Renaissance of Iloilo's textile industry

From page B4

ting up includes unwinding silk threads and meticulously laying these strands onto the *sab-ong*. Another set of thread, *likis*, is rolled in the tidal. Still another set is transferred into smaller spools or *lansadera* and these make for the warp and weft to weave the fabric. In cases where the order requires an inset design (*pulot*), a *salidsid* or a bamboo slat that holds the string that creates the inset design is set in place.

It takes about a day to complete a meter of hablon with the simplest design and 40 cones of 500 yards each of threat to complete three meters of the cloth.

Today, the Iloilo Office of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) counts about three cooperatives and 14 single proprietorship firms doing handwoven products here.

Aklan's piña cloth

Also, a matrilinear tradition, the delicate craftsmanship of the handwoven piña cloth had been passed on by mothers across several generations to their daughters. Noted weavers of this natural fiber are in Buswang and Bakhaw communities, in the capital town of Kalibo. A trip to Aklan will not be complete without a visit to the Dela Cruz House of Piña still ably mentored by the clan's grand matriarch, Susima Marte Dela Cruz

LINAWAN or piña fiber, from the pineapple plant and spun into fine piña threads that make exquisite fabric

Nanay Susing learned weaving at 16 from her mother, Ursula Collendres Marte who learned from her mother, Teodora. Susing says it was by observing and assisting her mother set up the *lindog* (warp) and the *binting* (reed) that she learned.

Nanay Susing says piña weaving requires a lot of patience and finger dexterity as the *hueog* (weft) is a very fine fiber that easily breaks. Unlike the materials used in hablon and patadyong that are bought over the counter, the piña fiber is a natural extract from the leaves of the native pineapple.

Removed of its gelatinous pulp, the white fine strands of the piña leaf called *liniwan* are washed, dried and knotted to create miles of piña thread. An experienced knotter can do about 5 to 8 grams of fiber a day. About 16 to 18 g of thread is needed to weave one yard of piña cloth. From here, the threads are set up on the loom. This is called warping and it takes one month to put this up. When the loom is ready, a *banca* or shuttle that contains the same thread goes through the warp to finally weave the special fabric. It takes a day to weave half a meter of a plain piña cloth.

It takes a little more time to weave with inset designs. And doing the intricate *suksuk* (inset designs) has been Nanay Susing's forte. To do this, heddles are set up as guide to a pattern. A simple inset design requires setting up of 10 to 20 heddles or guide. A complex design requires more than a hundred heddles.

Nanay Susing recalls that her mother and grandmother, who were experts in suksuk, only visualize the patterns and set up the heddles without executing the design on paper.

Today, Nanay Susing's three daughters assisting her in the business. About 40 *manoghaboe* (weavers) are in their employ. Libay is in charge of marketing, Ding is the overall manager and Let, an industrial engineer is in charge of production. It is Let who has taken the role of an apprentice in the fine craft of weaving and likely to be the purveyor of this tradition to the next generation of Dela Cruz women.

Antique's patadyong

In Barangay Bagtason, in Antique's Bugasong town, handlooms are found in just about every other house. No one complains of the heavy thud reverberating in the neighborhood as women weave various patterns of the multi-colored plaid. Lest one imagines patadyong is now used like any clothing material—for the long dress to miniskirts, tube tops to blazers. Women here also make hats and bags from the fabric.

Along with muscovado sugar, the patadyong is always part of official gifts presented to visiting dignitaries.

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December 12, 2007 • 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. • Ballroom A, Dusit Hotel Nikko, Makati City

As the dusk of the present year approaches, most of us are busy with last-minute Christmas preparations. One equally important matter, however, is knowing our tax obligations and meeting them timely and correctly. Procrastination due to lack of information could result to more burdens and wasted resources.

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- Latest BIR circular on tax amnesty availment guidelines is out
- Draft Transfer Pricing Regulations (TPR) may be issued anytime and be made effective January 2008
- Recent BIR issuances and public hearings have drummed up a number of tax collection measures
- Transfer Pricing is a priority area of focus–a good reason to look at interrelated party transactions
- The Bureau of Customs' electronic import system (e-Import) and Value-added Service Provider (VASP) Gateway

Speakers

- **Alexander B. Cabrera** is the managing partner for Tax of Isla Lipana & Co.
- **Carlos T. Carado II** is the firm's Transfer Pricing senior manager.
- **Dennis Anthony P. Caronan** is the senior manager for Worldtrade Management Services, Inc., an affiliate firm of PwC International.

Seminar fee

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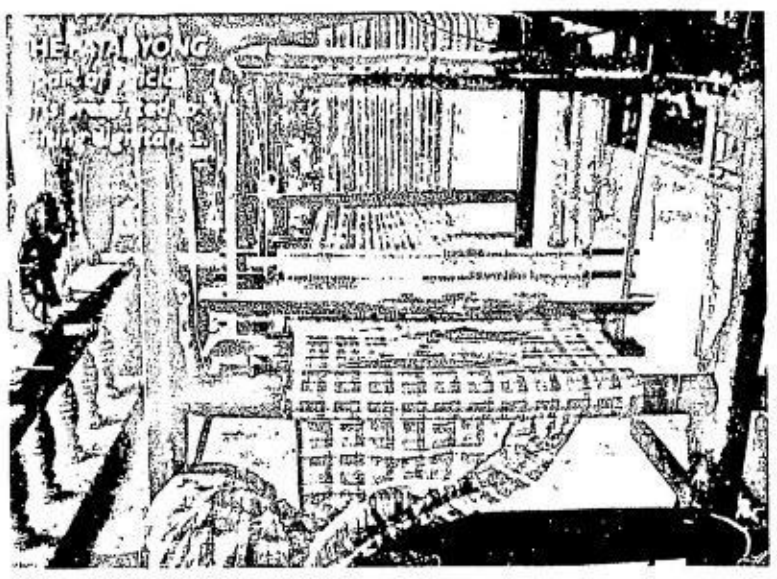

Renaissance of Iloilo's textile industry

Demand for hand-woven fabric, a 250-year old tradition, is on the rise

By Jo Martinez-Clemente

ILOILO HAD LONG LOST ITS TITLE as "Textile Center of the Philippines" but Western Visayas can still lay claim to being the capital of handwoven fabrics in the country today. In the remote villages of this region, the heavy thud of handloom continue to steal quiet afternoons as women weave the *patadyong* in Antique, the *hablon* in Iloilo and *piña* in Aklan.

With demand of handwoven fabric on the rise, Western Visayas' textile industry is in for a second coming.

A bit of history

Much like the fabric they produce, the women weavers of Western Visayas could very well be the warp and weft of trade and culture here as they managed to sustain this tradition of patience, endurance and creativity.

The transition of the southeastern Panay from a subsistence farming economy to commercial textile production in the mid-18th century and the subsequent growth of Iloilo's Jaro, Molo and Arevalo as the first urban concentration in Western Visayas is attributed to the influx of women weavers. Referred to as the "textile era" by historians and researchers, textile production in 19th century Iloilo reached remarkable degree of development that earned it the title "textile center of the Philippines."

Despite the entry of big industrial machines, handloom weaving remains a traditional craft in the region.

Iloiolo's hablon through the ages

The town's of Miagao, Oton and Duenas are Iloilo's major producers of handwoven fabric. In Oton, women of Barangay Cagbang still create artistry on the loom weaving a beautiful fabric synonymous to Iloilo—the hablon.

Among them is retired teacher Ana Cordero, who, as a child remembers having about 40 handlooms in their home where her mother and other weavers worked on. But through the years, the number of looms became less and the workers fewer until there were none.

In 1969, Cordero, who had just started a teaching career that would last 30 years, took to weaving again. What she had then was a small loom she used to weave straw mats on. Before she knew it, her small hobby started to get attention and then was born the Oton Woven products, a small business she did on the side. Her woven straw mats also drew in the traditional woven textiles. In time, she learned the "refinements" of the traditional craft and improved on some aspects of the craft her mother grappled with in the past. "Shrinkage" was one of them, she says.

When she retired in 1998, she devoted more time to her business. Her exposure to trade fairs here and abroad allowed her to market her products to more people as well as to learn more.

At Cordero's yard, 71-year-old Mercedes Compana and 46-year-old Fe Canzon are working on the loom. Both women learned the craft from their respective mothers when they were 18.

Much like patadyong weaving, the set-

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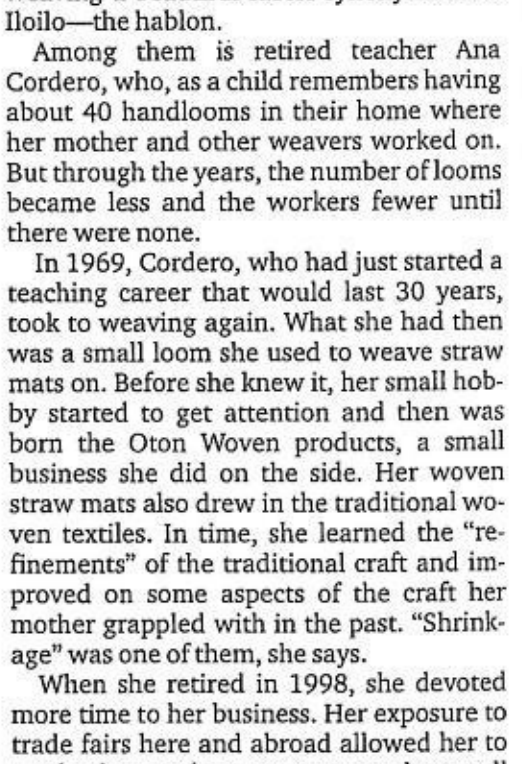
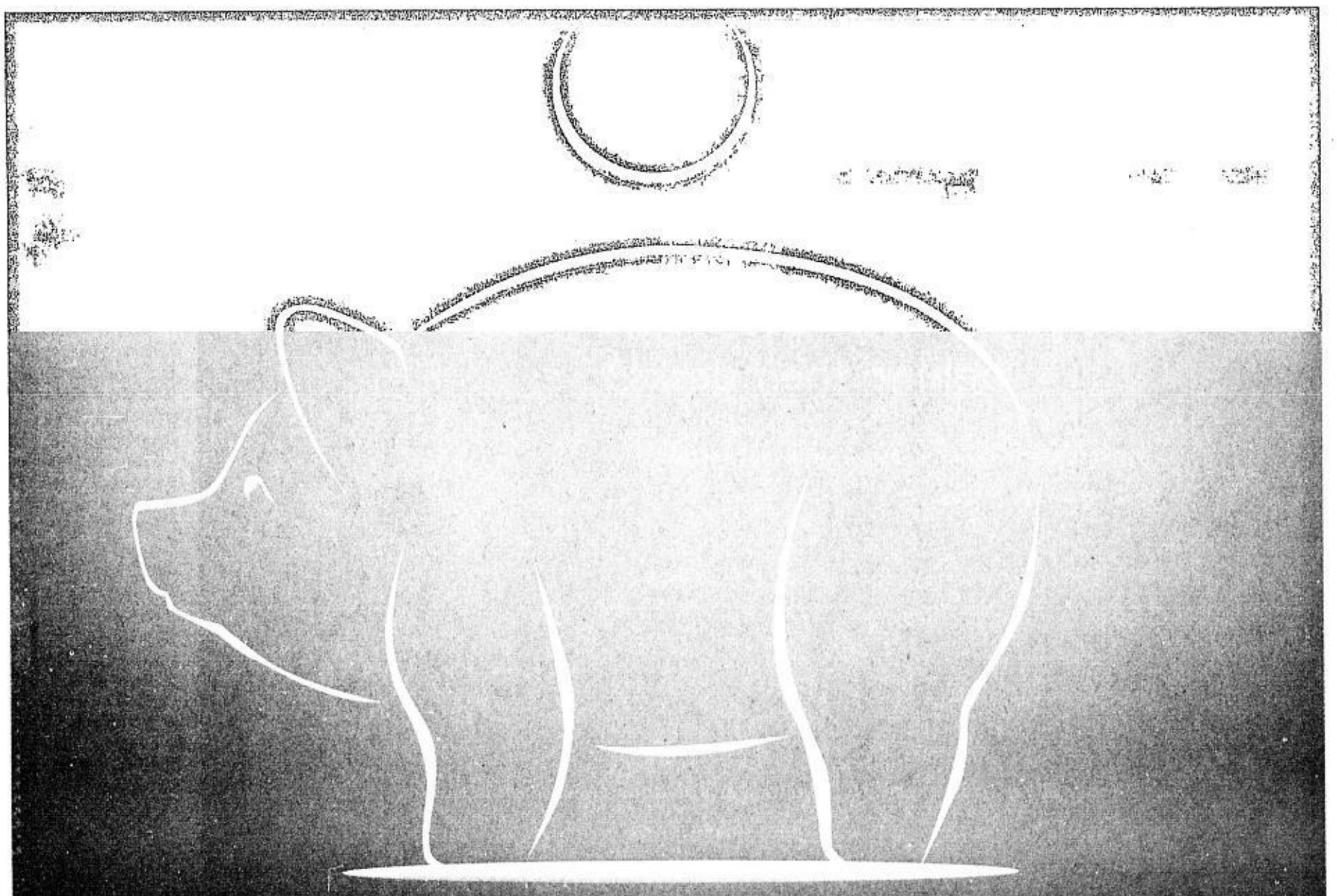


ALING FE of Oton, Iloilo does an inset design on a hablon.



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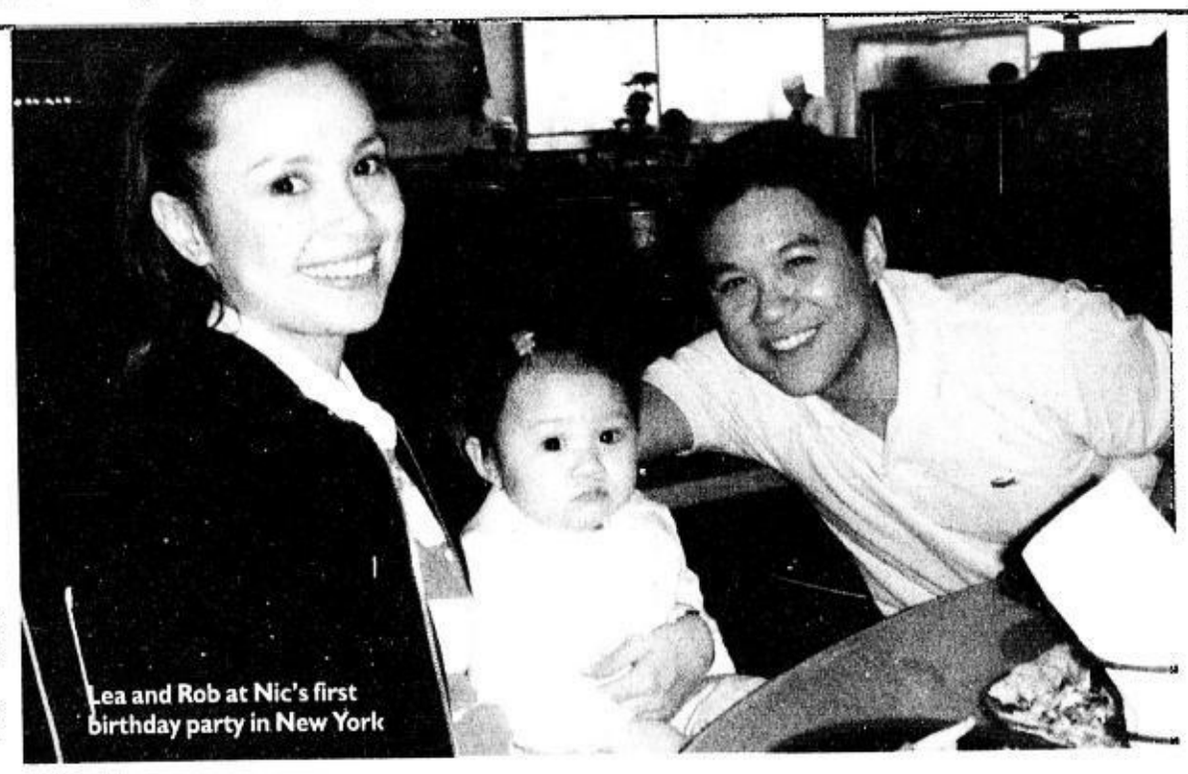
One of Nic's favorite activities

ROOTS AND WINGS
Cathy Babao-Guballa

Lea Salonga on the role she loves best



Lea and Rob at Nic's first birthday party in New York

LEA SALONGA breezed back into town quietly a few weeks ago. After the successful run of "Les Miserables" on Broadway, Lea had some down time before her next gig.

"We were missing daddy (Rob Chien) very much!" she tells us. Now in Manila in the role that she loves best, she expects to be flying back and forth to the United States this December. "That'll be my life for the next many months," she says.

It is a well-known fact that wherever Lea is, mom Ligaya is never far behind. Especially now with the addition of daughter Nicole.

One wonders how Lea is able to manage the sometimes sensitive relationship between mother and child when it comes to rearing and disciplining her Nicole. In a rare, brief interview, Lea talks about how she relishes every minute of motherhood (with much help from Ligaya) and how it has made her an even better actress.

What is the best thing about coming home after performing overseas?

I miss my family and my friends when I'm away! The best thing about returning home is being able to sleep once again in my own bed and get lots of rest and eat fantastic food.

Nicole is so big now! Has she shown any artistic inclinations?

Nicole is now a year and a half old and, right now, her inclination seems to be dancing. She loves to dance and starts moving those hips to any music she hears, even if it is just us clapping our hands.

What were the things you enjoyed doing with her when you were in New York? What do you enjoy when you are here?

We didn't get to do a lot when we were in New York since I was working, but she does love to eat so (enjoyed the) restaurants. I also like taking her shopping. We haven't done much of either since we (got) back, but I did take her to see her first musical this morning (Seussical the Musical). And she had a great time! She was dancing then, too!

Now that I know a show can hold her attention, I can take her to others as she grows up.

I know your mom is constantly with you wherever you go and I am sure has been such a huge comfort and help. If you don't mind my asking, don't you ever have issues with her regarding Nic ... sort of like a conflict between generations?

Brunch in NYC—Lea, Nic and Ligaya

I tend to follow her lead since she's the more experienced mother, but she lets my instincts rule, as well, and she doesn't overstep her boundaries. She will offer advice when she feels it's needed, but defers to me when a major decision has to be made.

We got along fine in New York for the eight months that we were all there.

I think everyone just needs to acknowledge that there is wisdom in all generations, but the parents must always rule. Always.

How has being a mother changed you as a person? As a performer?

I think I've become more sensitive as a person as well as a performer. It's now also easier to call upon whatever emotional reserves I have whenever I need to ... I cry far more easily now (and my husband makes fun of me sometimes because of it).

How are you able to balance work and home?

There was help in New York, thanks to my mom, and I have a *yaya* here in Manila. With (people to) help, it's not that difficult to fulfill professional commitments. I also scale back a bit, (to) make sure (I) spend time at home. When I'm here, I bring her to shows when the gigs are in hotels.

What are your plans while you are here? Are you doing shows? concerts?

Shows are planned for next year ... the major one being Cinderella. That's an Asian tour that kicks off in Manila in late July. I'll be on that tour until April.

Does your child-rearing method change when you are here and when you are in New York?

Yes. When I'm here I do have a *yaya* because I need the help. It allows me to take a breather from time to time. (But) my daughter is very attached to me and, sometimes, no one else but me will do for her.

That can be exhausting. In New York, my mom was there. (On the flight) home, Nicole only wanted Mommy to hold her. It's a great feeling but, in reality, it can be very tiring.

How involved is Rob as a parent? Are there plans for more children? How do you squeeze in the essential "we" time?

We're both tired at the end of the day, but we do have dinner out together at least once a week, or a visit to the spa. Whatever, as long as we're together.

As for Rob's parenting, I think he's now trying to reacquaint himself with his little girl, who hasn't forgotten him (thank goodness). We'd love more children (maybe just one more), but that'll have to wait until after Cinderella is over.

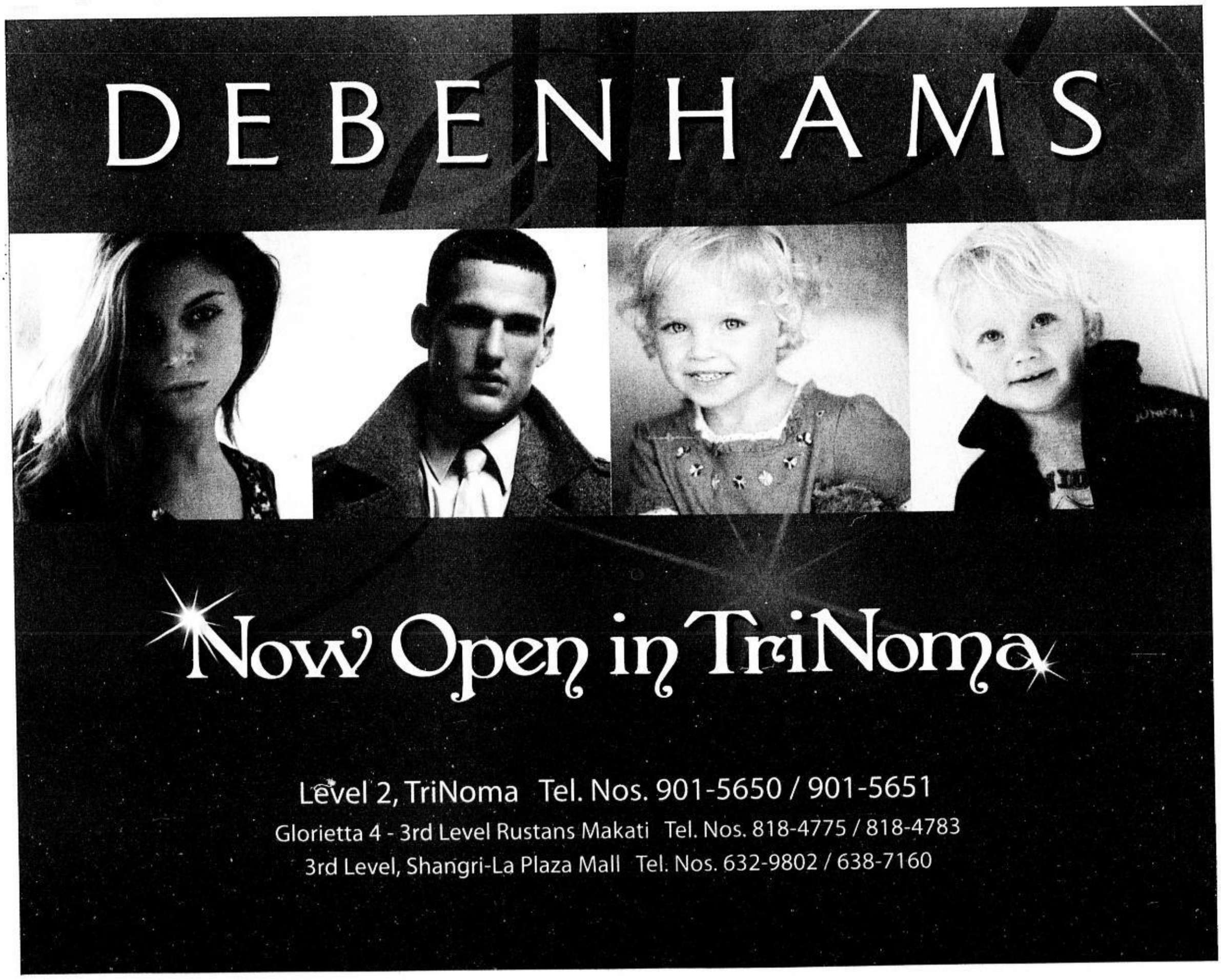
Many women are delaying motherhood until their early 30s. What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of having your first child in your 30s?

I prefer to think only of the advantages. Women in their 30s are healthier now than their counterparts a generation or two ago. And we have a greater reserve of patience. We also know ourselves better and have lived more. I think a mom in her 30s has more to offer. I certainly do. There's no way I could have been a mom in my 20s.

In what ways are you like your mom as a parent? And how do you differ?

(Laughs) I'm just generally more laid back ... I don't lose my cool very often, if at all. I remember my mom raising her voice from time to time ... I'm a lot quieter. I save the vocalizing for when I'm onstage.

E-mail the author at cathybabao@gmail.com



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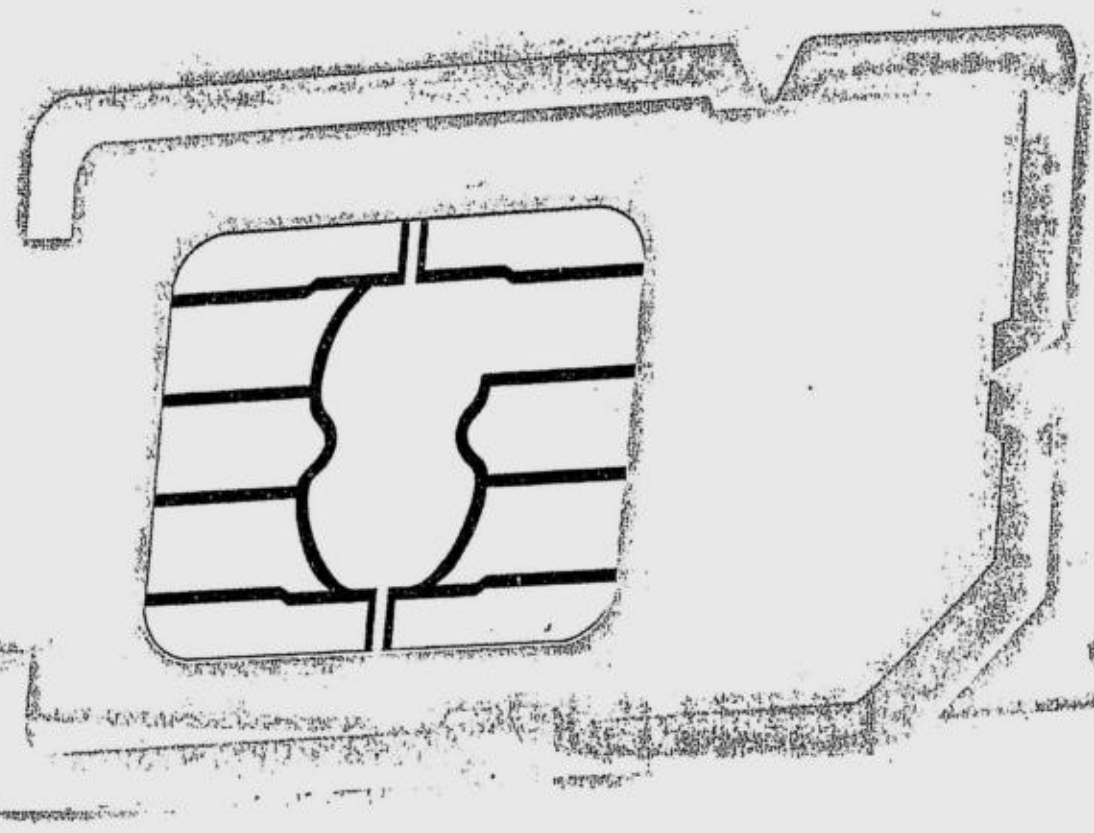

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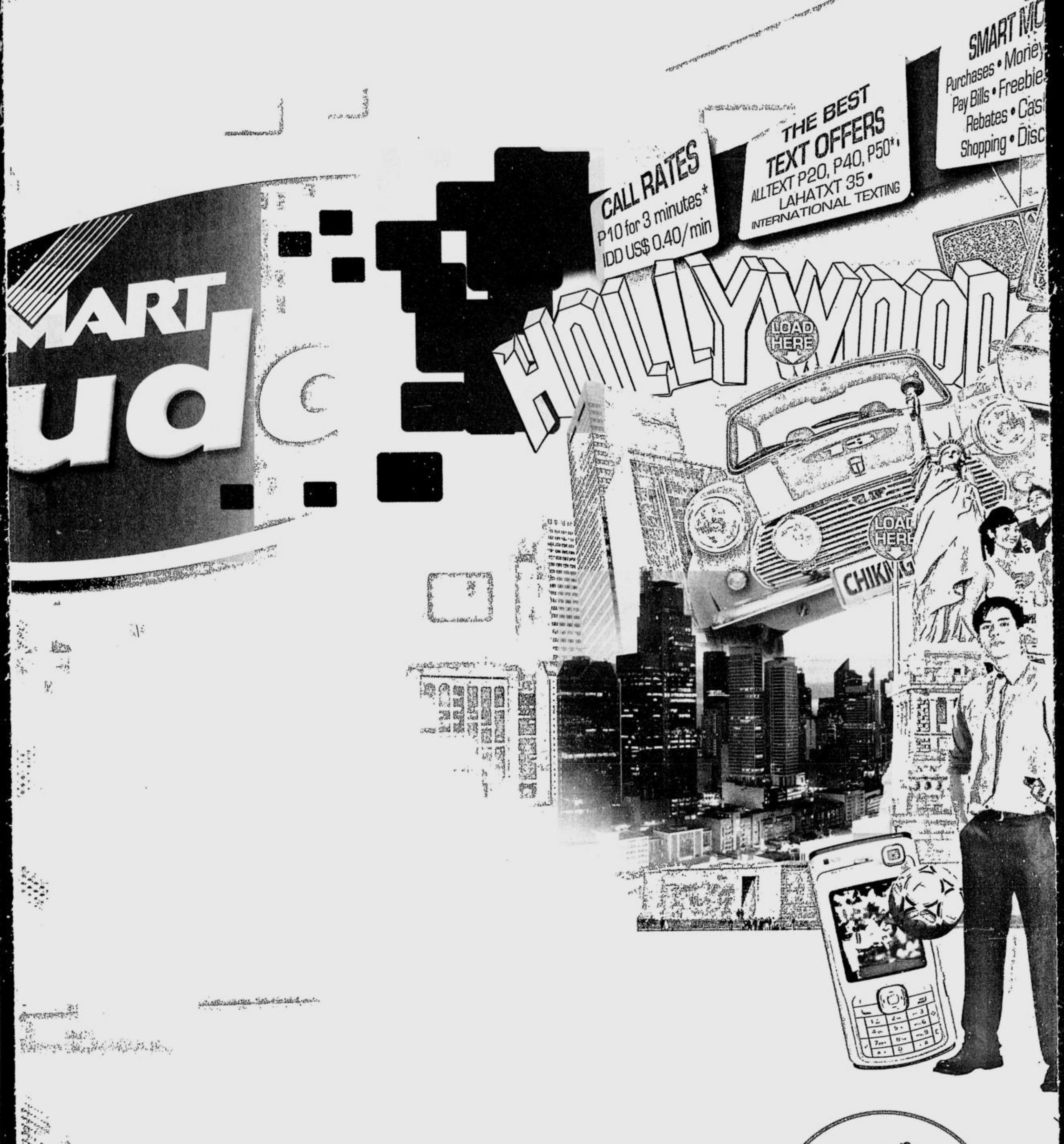

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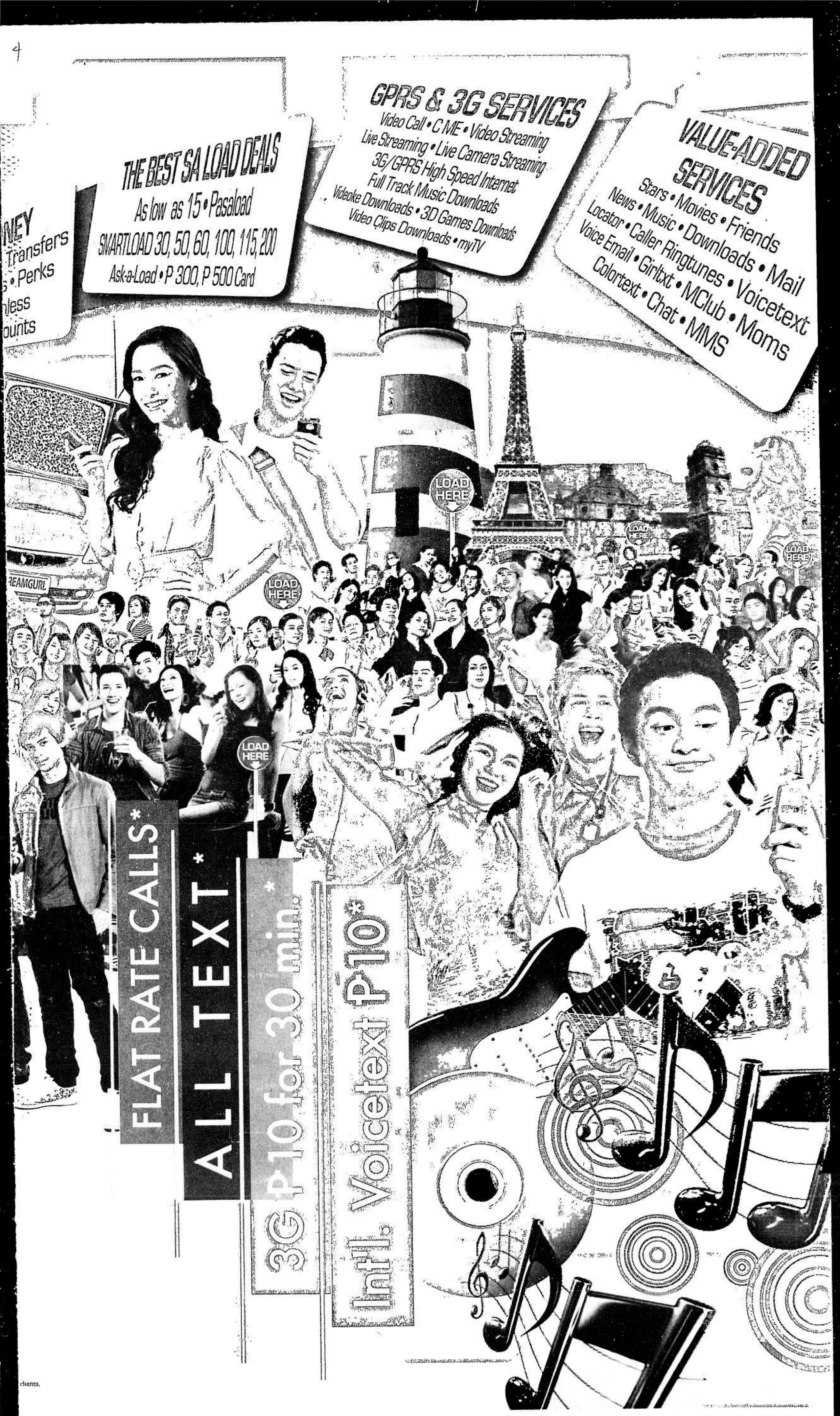

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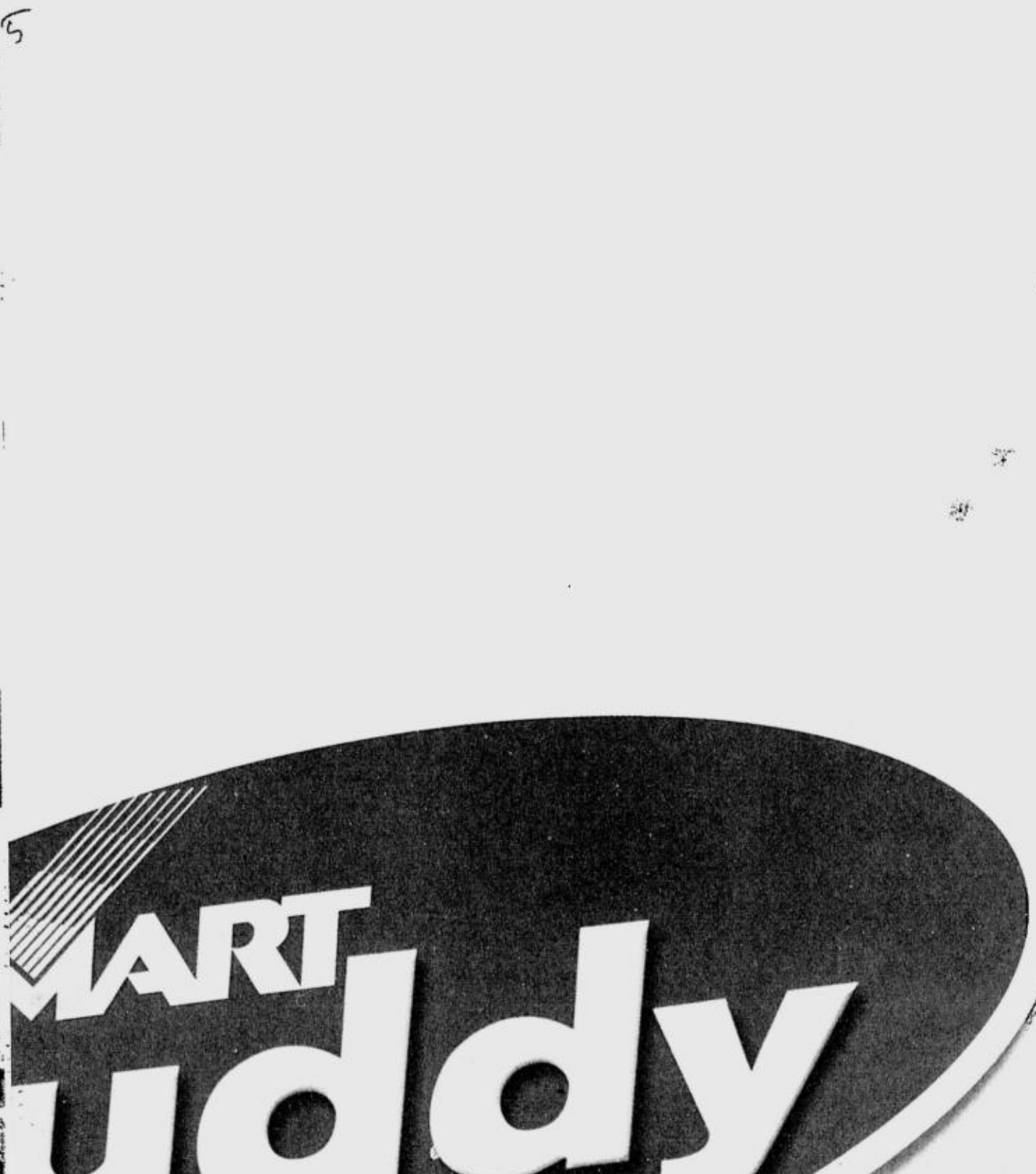

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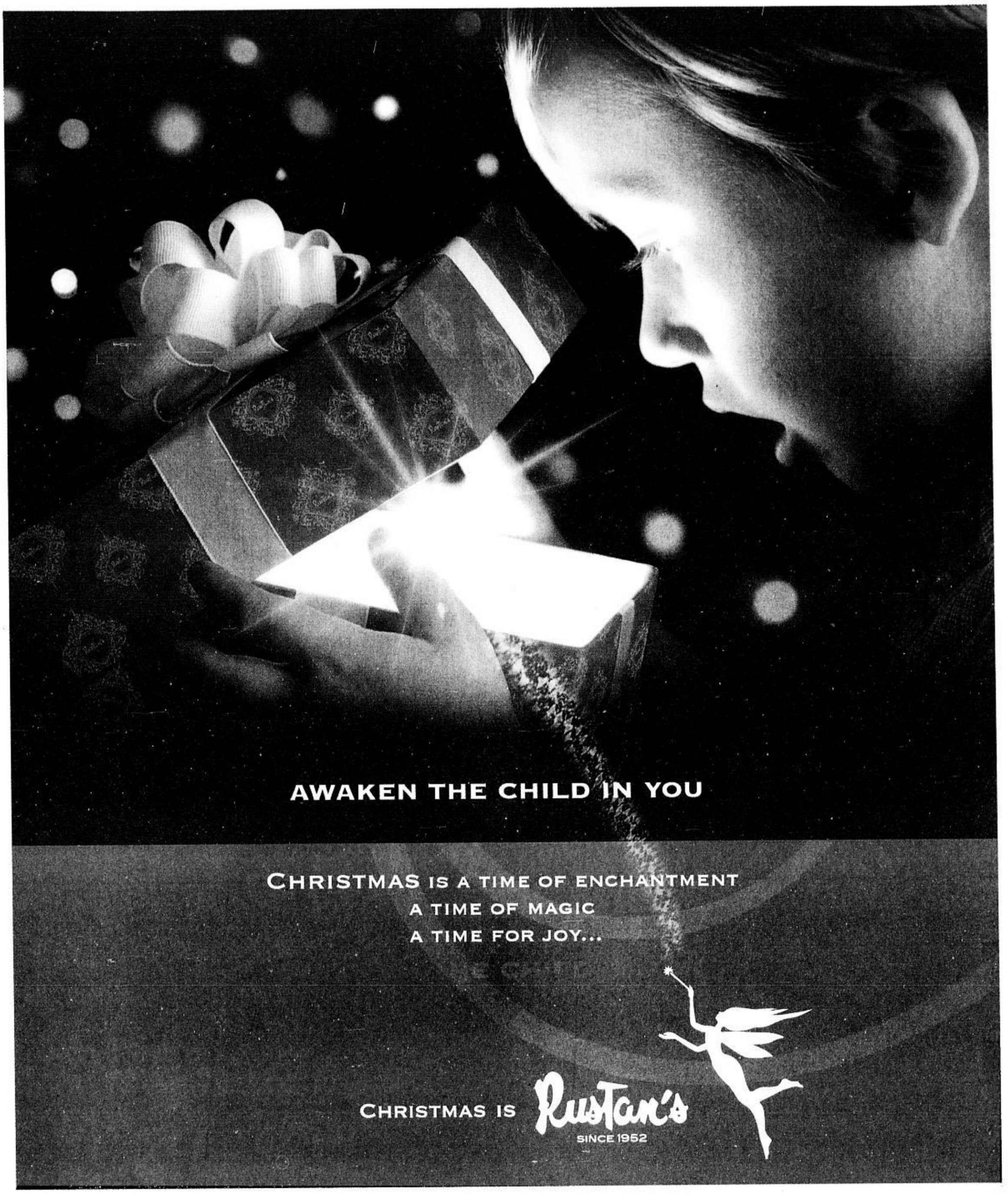

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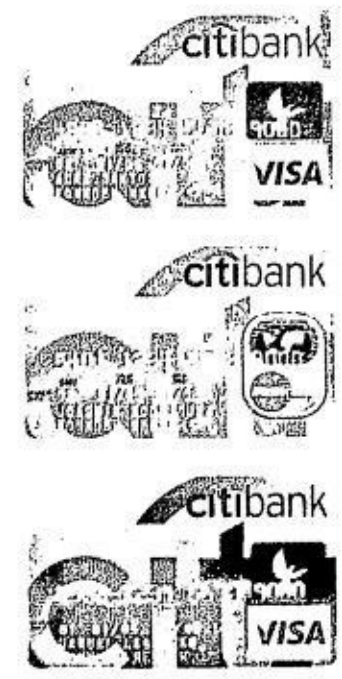

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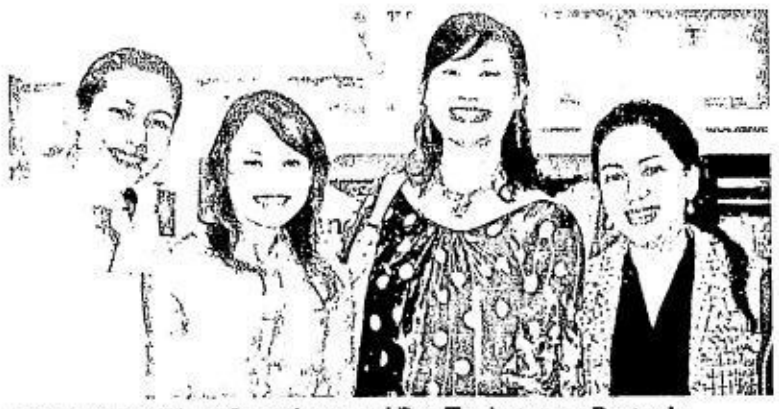
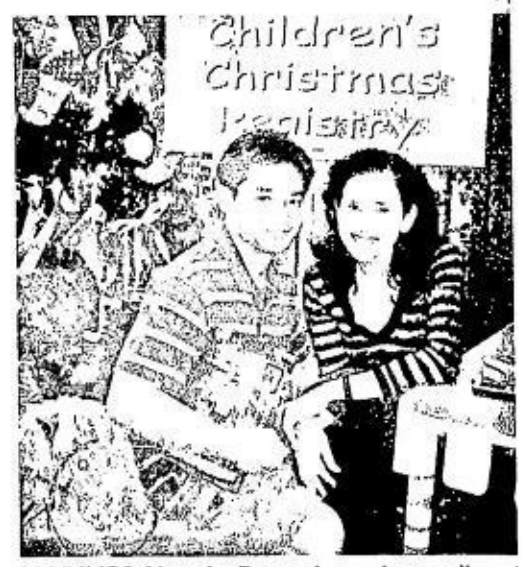
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
Sunday LIFESTYLE

SANTA Claus with his fairies and elf at the Rustan's kids department



CITIBANK'S Alma Gruenberg and Bea Tan between Rustan's gorgeous ladies Carmen Delgado and Petite Olbes

MARIXI Prieto, Nena Tantoco and Ditas Araneta doing midnight shopping



MARINES Almeda, Rustan's service quality manager, and husband Leo

Season for wishful thinking

OH, THE WEATHER OUTSIDE IS FRIGHTful or might I say, delightful! Thanks to a multitude of prayers and divine intervention, our country was spared from possible killer storms and other nasty "tempests" that could really soak our Christmas spirits away.

It's not too late to start making your Christmas gift list

TESSA!

Tessa Prieto-Valdes

So as Christmas approaches let's start thinking about the monumental task of gift giving. Start by making our Christmas lists and checking it twice. My list has new additions, including my naughty-and-nice friends from "Celebrity Duets."

Gifts are primarily for the kids of course, and this giving has just gotten easier. Rustan's Department Store has launched Christmas Wish List, a kids' gift registry open to all until Dec. 16. Just like the wedding registry that Rustan's pioneered, Wish List is very helpful to parents, godparents, and of course, the ever-generous grandparents. Now we can all find out that kids don't really want those shirts or books we give them and what they really need is the latest Nintendo game.

At the Rustan's Makati launch, overflowing popcorn and Haagen Dazs ice cream delighted all. The main highlight was the kids themselves, making their lists assisted by helpful elves and fairies. Rustan's, as always, innovates by adding its luxury tradition and impeccable service into the kids' department. The Wish List is available at all Rustan's branches, and Santa and his gang are at Rustan's Makati on weekends.

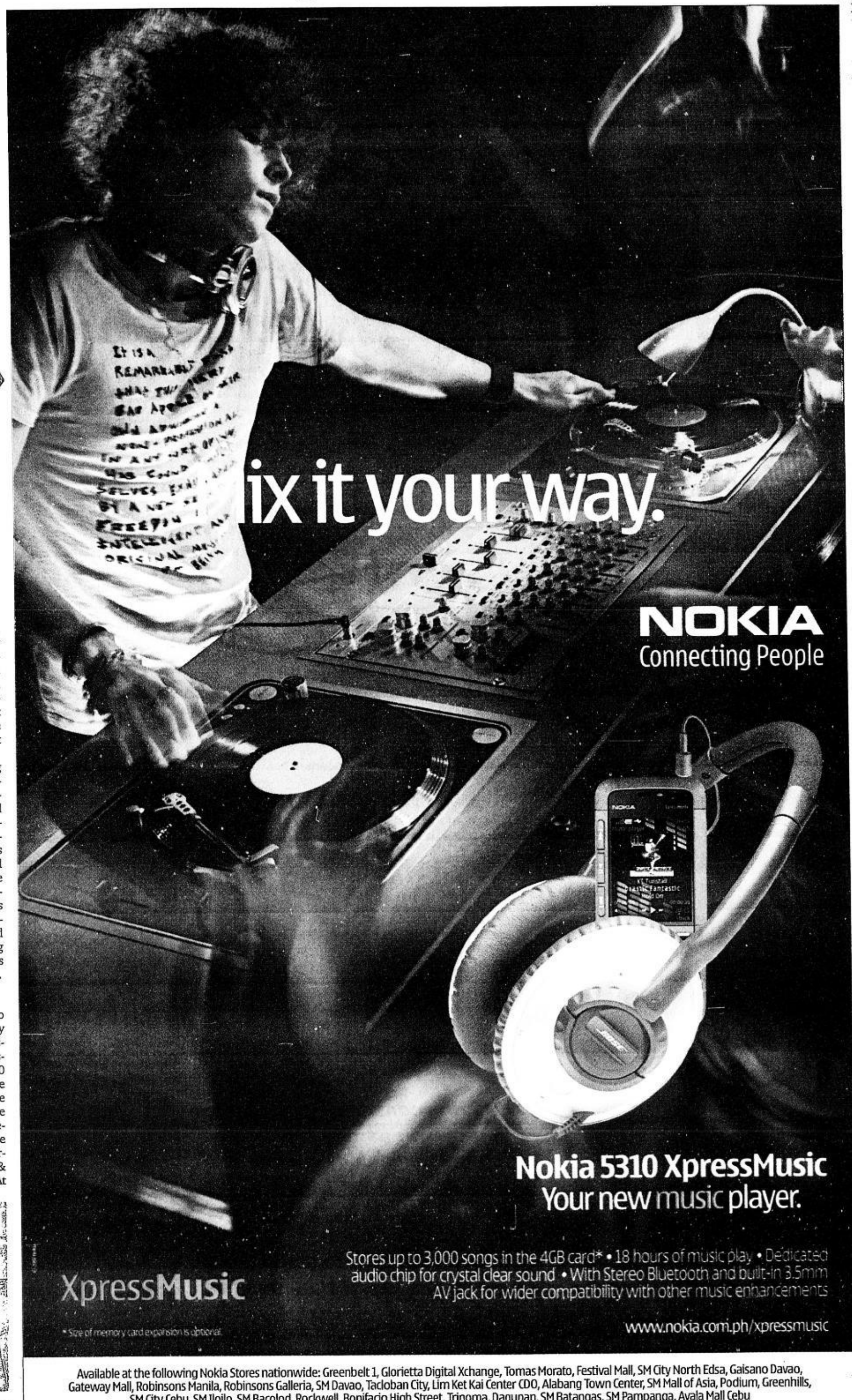
LONG-TIME friend Tara Villareal

RUSTAN'S merchandising executive Jia and Gabby Estrella

Discounts

Citibank adds to the merriment by teaming up with Rustan's to offer discounts of up to 50 percent, exclusive privileges like free gift wrapping, free parking, and irresistible freebies like designer bags, perfumes and Tiffany & Co. collectibles. At

GIRLS SHOPPING. Cyn Ocampo with daughters Camille and Angelique



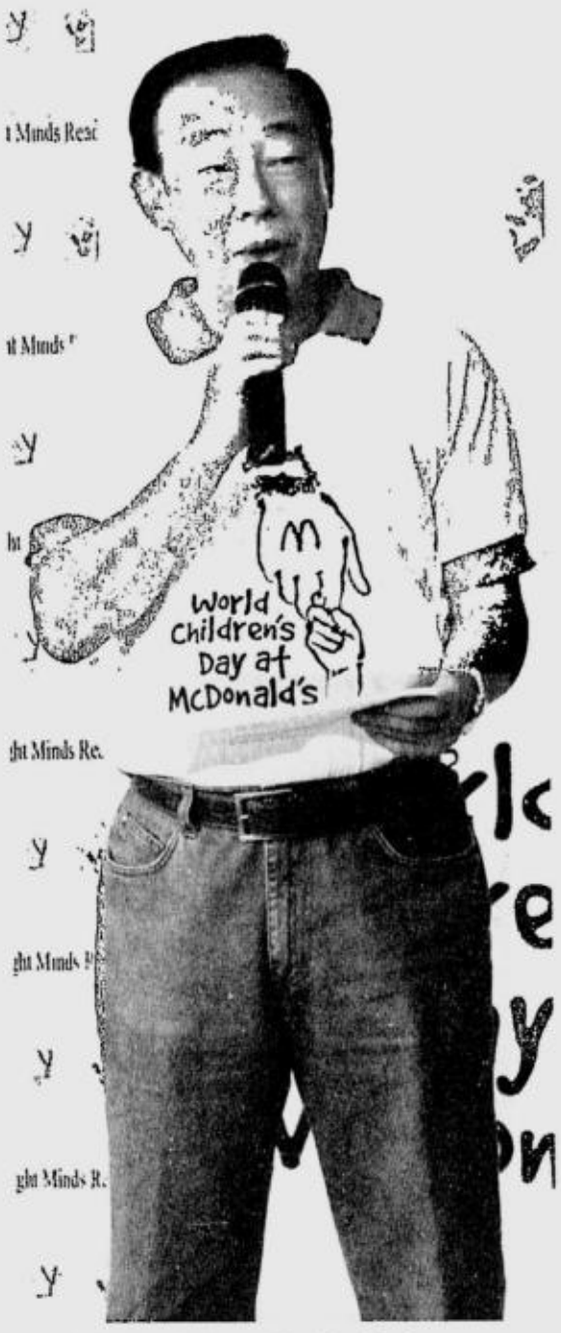
Ronald McDonald House Charities marks 5th World Children's Day celebration

World Children's Day represents a unique opportunity to bring McDonald's system of more than 31,000 restaurants in 118 countries together. As part of its ongoing commitment to the well-being of children and families, McDonald's employees, Owner/Operators and suppliers, its customers and neighbors come together to support this wonderful event.

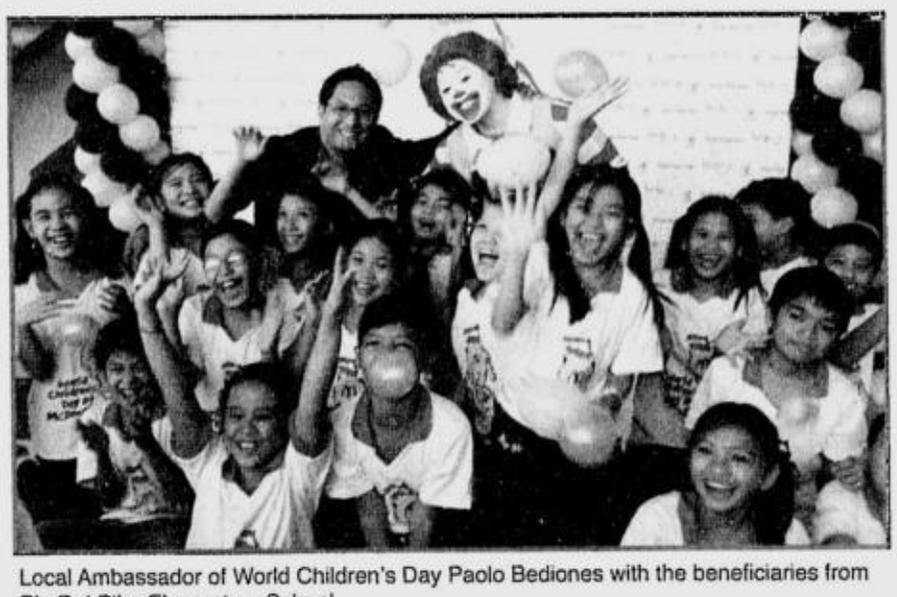
Since its inception in November 2002, World Children's Day has contributed to raising more than $100 million and McDonald's can always do more. World Children's Day speaks to the essence of the brand and its strong heritage of giving back.

Today, more than ever, it is critical that the commitment to being part of the communities it serves and add to McDonald's trust bank of goodwill is continued.

November 20 marks the 5th World Children's Day at McDonald's in the Philippines. Ronald McDonald House Charities, the charity arm of McDonald's, will kick-off the event with various charitable activities that benefit the marginalized and highlight the hope for Filipino children.



Ronald McDonald House Charities Chairman George T. Yang



Local Ambassador of World Children's Day Paolo Bediones with the beneficiaries from Pio Del Pilar Elementary School.

They're loving it. Kids of Pio Del Pilar Elementary School with (standing l-r) RMHC Board Member Mary Gucheco, RMHC Chairman George Yang, DepEd Asst. Sec. Teresita Inciong, Ronald McDonald, DSWD Esperanza Cabral, Paolo Bediones, RMHC President Kenneth Yang and RMHC Executive Director Zonito Torrevillas.

Bahay Bulilit Day Care Center

The Bahay Bulilit Day Care Center is a program of a tripartite effort of the local government, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and Ronald McDonald House Charities. It serves as a good option to low-income and indigent families who want to avail the benefits of day care centers.

RMHC provides for the structure or the building, which is the venue for the center's activities and projects. The DSWD provides for the manpower needed to supervise the activities of the day care center. The hired social workers are expected to be adept in the facilitation of activities that instill value formation and teach basic social skills. While the local government where the day care center is situated takes charge of the finances needed to sustain the day care center. So far, the Bahay Bulilit day care centers have received generous amounts of support from the respective local governments where they are under.

A short trip inside Bahay Bulilit will reveal walls painted with pastel colors, embellished with pictures, pasted with large and illustrated cut-outs of numbers, colorful puzzle mats placed on the floor, and plastic tables and chairs in a classroom type arrangement. Outside, the columns of the building are painted with bright shades of yellow and red – the enchanting colors of McDonald's – that makes it all the more inviting to children. In addition to this is a playground for outdoor recreation, which makes the whole environment conducive for toddlers preparing for formal education. Add to this exciting set-up, the playful and sunny disposition of children, giving you a glimpse of how fun-filled the mornings and afternoons of toddlers are.

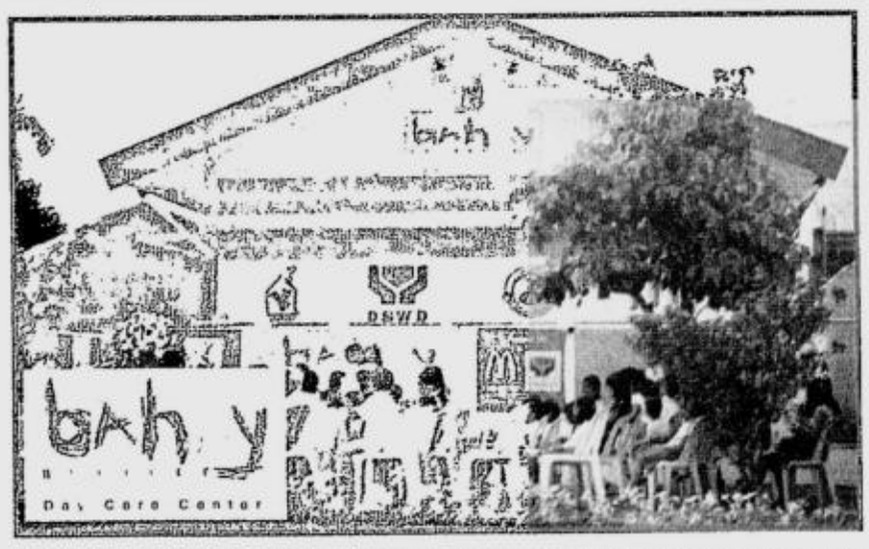
There are currently 13 Bahay Bulilit Day Care Centers situated all over the country. The first Bahay Bulilit Day Care Center was inaugurated last 20 November 2002 at Barangay East Rembo, C-5, Makati City and the latest were in Pangasinan, Laoag, Tarlac City and Ozamis City. Each day care center holds up to about 40-80 children who are divided according to age bracket. Children six years old and below are accommodated in the center.

Showcasing the talents of Filipino children, a Sabayang Pagbigkas will be presented. A very Filipino staging, the Sabayang Pagbigkas is a simultaneous oration of a story by 20 pupils. Children from three schools in NCR will stage this in Malacañang, no less.

To cap the day's activities, RMHC will serve all-time favorites to The Little Children's Home, Sun and Moon Foundation, Inc., Educational Research and Development Assistance Foundation, Inc., and Children's Home of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Expect Ronald McDonald and his friends to spread the joy to these kids with party games and gifts.

"RMHC constantly strives to improve on its rich tradition as a good community partner and neighbor. As the needs of the children have increased over time, so has the need for companies and citizens to play a more active role in effecting positive change," says George Yang, Chairman of RMHC. This is embodied in the cooperation and collaboration McDonald's has with different organizations and government agencies to implement its projects and make a difference.

George Yang turning over to DSWD Secretary Esperanza Cabral a symbolic structure of the Bahay Bulilit Day Care Center.



Bahay Bulilit groundbreaking ceremony last November 20, 2007 in Tarlac City. Present during the event were RMHC Volunteer Emma Camacam, McDonald's Operations Manager Te Segundo, Ronald McDonald, RMHC Board Member Mary Gocheco, Mayor Genaro M. Mendoza, DSWD officials and the local parish priest.

A brighter future with Bright Minds Read

Help Ronald McDonald House Charities keep bright minds reading.

Support Ronald McDonald House Charities' Bright Minds Read Program. Donate old or new storybooks for the benefit of public school children.

Bright Minds Read.

The Bright Minds Read (BMR) Program is one of the banner programs of Ronald McDonald House Charities, which seeks to address the growing number of non-readers in the country and in turn help in providing quality education to Filipino children.

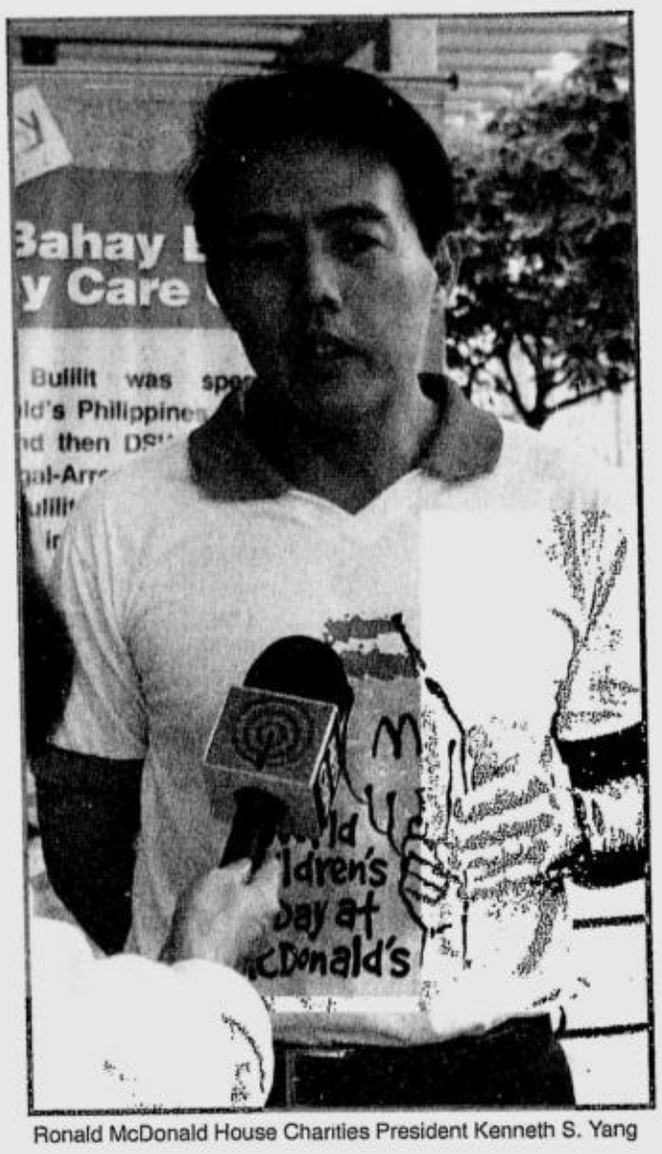
The BMR Program aims to make children realize how vital education is. By providing reading books that are both fun and educational, the program hopes to encourage students to take up reading as a pastime and eventually develop a love for the written word.

Established in 2002 in response to a shocking study that showed 40 percent of grade 1 pupils are nonreaders, BMR focuses solely on students. It also provides training manuals for teachers, which teach them strategies in teaching reading to very young children. The students, on the other hand, are given workbooks that are especially made to enhance their reading skills. Kits are given to beneficiary schools with each kit containing 32 big books from Adarna Publishing, 200 activity sheets, lesson plans and teaching modules for teachers.

To date, RMHC has helped around four million students and has improved the percentage of nonreaders to six percent since its inception. It has achieved its target on zero non-readers for the pilot students in 2005.

With 265 stores in the Philippines, McDonald's is uniquely positioned to help. With a simple purchase of a Happy Meal, a portion automatically goes to Ronald McDonald House Charities to benefit its banner programs that help the Filipino children. Donation boxes can also be found at the cash counter.

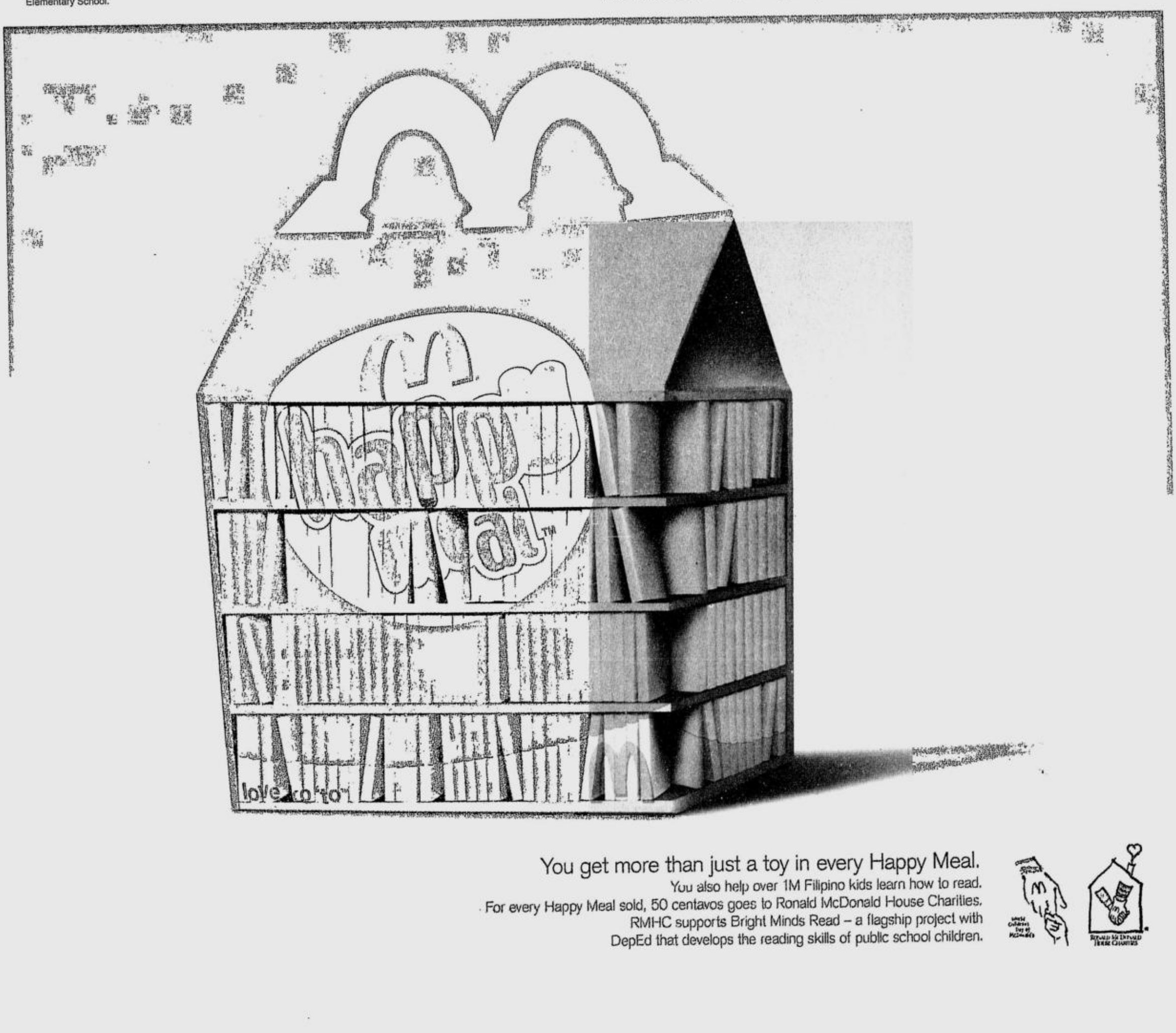
For RMHC, nothing is more important and more rewarding than helping the Filipino children reach their highest potential. The Ronald McDonald House Charities have a direct and immediate impact on the lives of these kids and their families and will continue to relentlessly help these kids with sustainable programs all year round!



Ronald McDonald House Charities President Kenneth S. Yang

BMR turnover ceremony at F. Benitez Elementary School (Main). Mayor Jejomar C. Binay with McDonald's Restaurant Manager Sheila Rivera and Crew Joan Leonardo awarding the BMR kit to a student and the principal of recipient school Nemesio Yabut Elementary School.

Ronald McDonald with RMHC President Kenneth S. Yang turn overs a BMR kit to the Department of Education Asst. Sec. Dr. Teresita G. Inclong. With them are (L-R): McDonald's VP for Marketing Margo Torres, RMHC Chairman George T. Yang, RMHC Board Members Mary Gocheco, Leo Jabegero, Gigi Fernandez and RMHC Executive Director Zonito Torrevillas.



You get more than just a toy in every Happy Meal.

You also help over 1M Filipino kids learn how to read.
For every Happy Meal sold, 50 centavos goes to Ronald McDonald House Charities.
RMHC supports Bright Minds Read – a flagship project with DepEd that develops the reading skills of public school children.

TECH Tabuena of Rustan's Consignor Management Division; Willie Tan of Multiple Choice by Topchoice; Rustan's Nena Tantoco with Multiple Choice Phils. directors Ly Locsin, Ralph Locsin and Joanna Chan

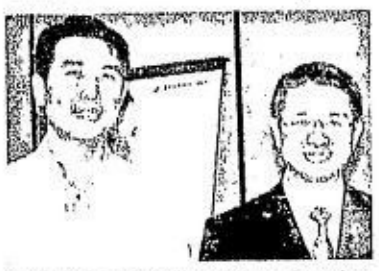
WILLIE Tan with Bern Siy Quiason of Seattles Best, Irene Ibanez of Urban Spa, and Ly Locsin of Multiple Choice (Phils.) CHIPS DAYRIT

RUSTAN'S Rico Tantoco (left) and wife Nena (second from right) with Citibank's Cecille Fonacier and Mark Jones

RUSTAN'S Rhoda Campos-Aldanese (left) and Lifestyle Asia's Ana Sobrepeña

Season for wishful thinking

ANGELO Barretto with Celine Gabriel and Rose Montenegro



AXIS Global's Ricky Sy and senior vice president Chee Soon

SENNHEISER brand ambassador DJ Nikki Jurado with wife Tina and son Nari

DUET partners Tessa Prieto Valdes and Sennheiser's Martin Low

TRICIA Chiongbian

From page D1

Rustan's, the more the Citibank credit card gets swiped, the bigger the reward!

This exciting partnership was launched in an intimate affair graced by Citibank top executives, led by country business manager **Mark Jones**, cards business director **Bea Tan** and marketing director **Cecile Fonacier**, as well as Rustan's Commercial Corporation president **Bienvenido Tantoco Jr.** and his lovely wife **Nena**.

Shopping 'til midnight

Afterwards there was shopping until midnight, and as I looked around at the beautiful layout and tasteful merchandise, it was clear that the stylishly graceful Nena Tantoco had waved her artistic wand and sprinkled her wondrous work throughout the store.

Also part of the Rustan's marketing team is eagle-eyed **Rhoda Campos-Aldanese**. She is responsible for the expansive and unique merchandise in the store, ensuring that harassed shoppers need no longer go overseas during the Balikbayan-box-overflowing-the-conveyor-belt season and just shop at Rustan's instead.

For example, my favorite scents and candles are from **Annick Goutal**. I was so pleased when Rustan's marketing executive **Lia Bernardo** told me Annick Goutal is available at the Cosmetic Department together with its whole line of beauty products like moisturizers, lotions and serums.

Rustan's kitchenware

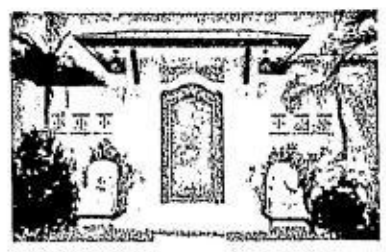
Rustan's also has a wide range of dining sets and kitchenware. Multiple Choice by Topchoice recently launched its latest collection of tableware with the theme, "White Hot—Beautiful & Basic."

Five fabulous table settings showcased the brand's latest white collection. Guests graced the affair in their best white getups, all the better to get their white hot discounts on the new arrivals.

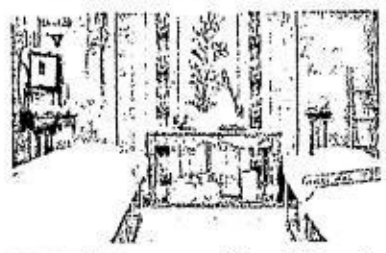
For the more color-coded, they also have Multiple Choice—Wonderful World, which blends in beautifully with the white goods.

The real problem in shopping is how to stay focused on the List. There is always the gift that arrives from someone not on the List, triggering another uptick in our Christmas stress meters.

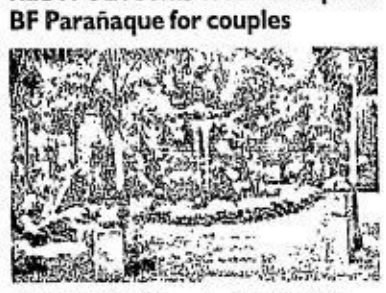
De-stressing is an important part of our Christmas shopping process. The fifth floor of Rustan's is designed to be a wellness level offering various services ranging from spa treatments to getting a Brazilian wax in preparation for a post-holiday beach outing. There is also a Belo Medical Clinic with two, gender-separated centers.



TRANQUIL Kartini Spa in Alabang Town Center



RESTFUL rooms of Kartini Spa in BF Parañaque for couples



CASCADING waterfalls inside garden of Kartini Spa

Soothing gifts

I love the process of gift-matching, which I define as finding the perfect gift for the right person such that one's gift is not automatically put into the recipient's recycle bin alongside the proverbial fruitcakes.

For the stressed and overworked, which means possibly

KARTINI Spa owner Nina Malvar (seated) and daughter Ria with her excellent spa staff

all of Metro Manilans, a gift of healing with soothing hands is always welcome. There are several spas all over the city, each with striking interiors and excellent treatments. Recently opened Kartini Spa (www.kartinispa.com) at the Alabang Town Center is a refreshing oasis that rejuvenates the body, mind and spirit. Renowned landscape artist **Nina Malvar** created this new branch to complement her first spa in BF Homes Parañaque.

Tucked amid the sprawling landscaped gardens, thriving greenery and cascading waterfalls, the Kartini Spa has a wide range of massage therapies and foot pampering rituals that use indigenous ingredients as well as fine essential oils. Kartini is a breath of relaxing air in our stress-filled city. For appointments, call 8074356 or 0917-816-1368.

Urban Spa

Still on the subject of spas, Urban Spa (6876195 or 0917-8918195) at the Shangri-La Mall also has holiday packages and discounts aside from carrying Multiple Choice gift items. A stressed-out friend can take a quick break from the shopping crowds for a well-deserved treatment.

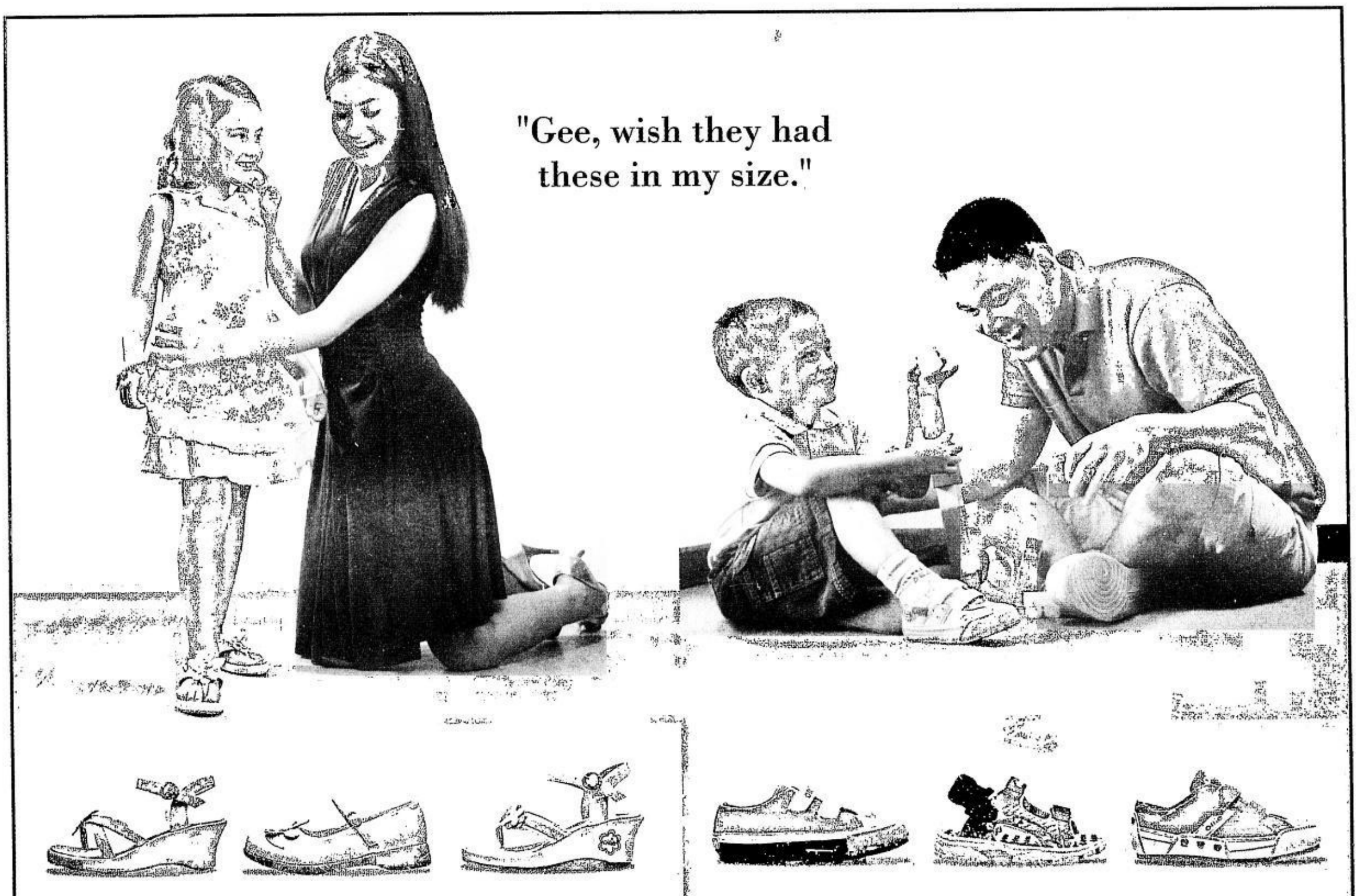
Health is wealth especially when the holiday waistline seems to start expanding on its own. For those into healthy living, how about a look at the newest sugar substitute in town?

Extracted from the Stevia plant, Greenlite Natural Sweeter is ideal not only for drinks but for baking and cooking as it is heat stable. The exposure to high temperatures does not affect or alter any of its properties.

The Washingston-based Glycemic Research Institute has classified Greenlite as "diabetic friendly," meaning it does not cause an insulin spike or a rise in blood sugar levels. That's great news for those on low-sugar and low-calorie diets. Greenlite is available in most groceries.

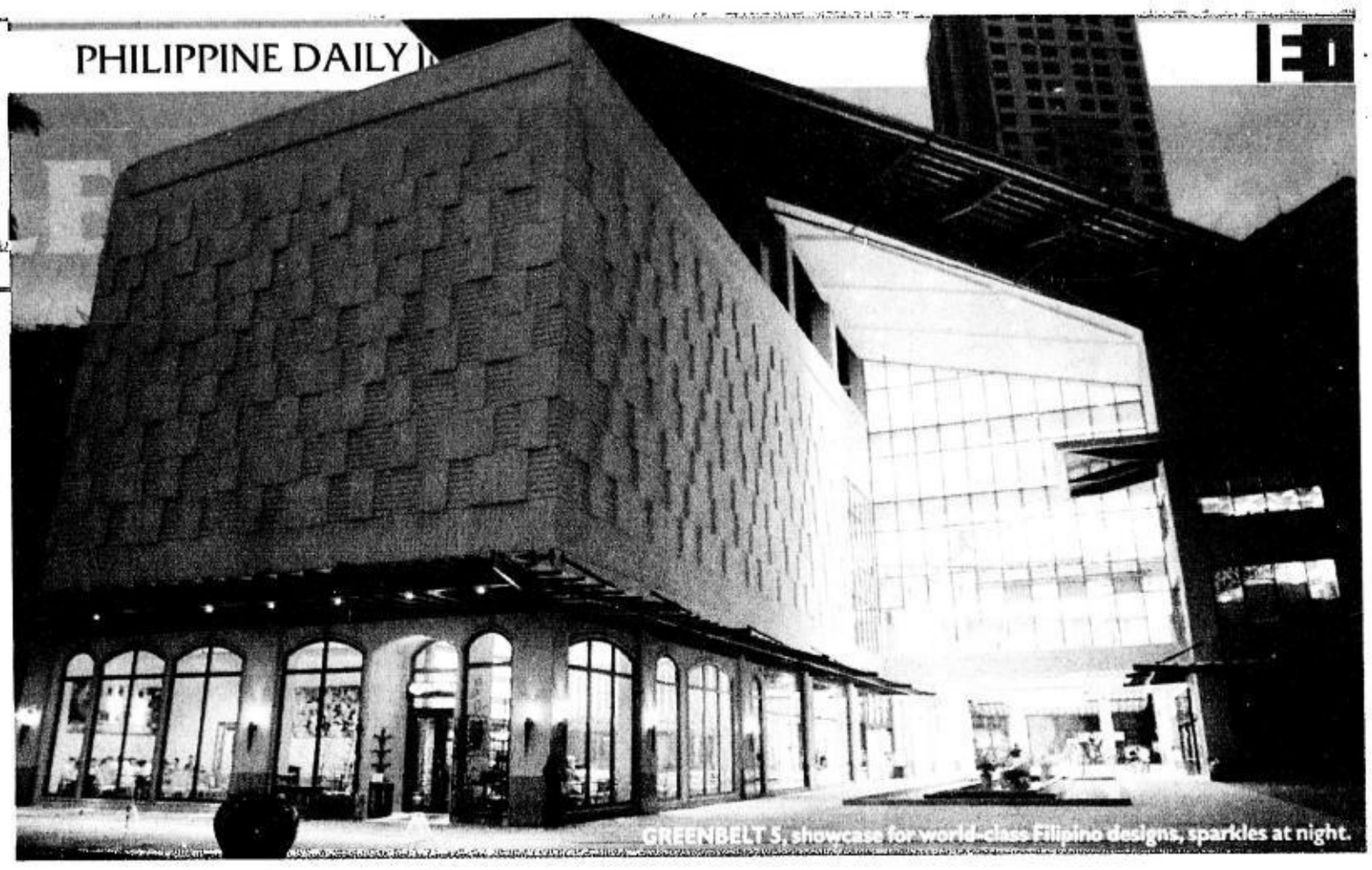
Next week, I'll come up with more gift ideas! Till then, let's hope for good weather!

E-mail the author at seaprincess@inquirer.com.ph.



Sunday LIFESTYLE

PHILIPPINE DAILY I



GREENBELT 5, showcase for world-class Filipino designs, sparkles at night.

Fifth of a series —but not the least

Greenbelt 5 completes the groundbreaking lifestyle center owned by the visionary Ayala Malls

By Chelo Banal-Formoso
Photos by Jim Guia-Punzalan

BUILT AROUND A PARK AND a chapel, two emotionally appealing sites to Filipinos, AyalaLand's 12-hectare Greenbelt complex is now a genuine loop with the near-completion of Greenbelt 5.

The AyalaLand folks call Greenbelt 5 the "culminating piece" to what they had planned long ago to be the premier lifestyle center not just in Makati, which has always been an Ayala turf, but in the country.

They are not kidding, and none of it is hype. In Greenbelt, ALC has presented Filipinos an alternative shopping-and-dining experience, one that defied the big box concept of malls.

After Greenbelt 1, ALC hired Callison Architecture Inc. of Seattle, Washington to plan a sprawling, extroverted urban complex. The resulting retail developments have been named, without much ado, Greenbelts 2 to 5.

While Greenbelts 2 and 4 are totally covered, Greenbelts 3 and 5 are not. As for retail use, Ayala did away with anchor stores in Greenbelt. Where Greenbelt 2 is focused exclusively on food, with housing on top, Greenbelt 3 has included shopping and entertainment—cinemas, arcade games, etc.—in the mix. And where Greenbelt 4 is totally all luxury shops for yuppie fashionistas and their glamorous seniors, Greenbelt 5 is a happy mix of upscale fashion, food and fun. "Not just for the 30 and above but for all ages," notes Ayala Malls operations manager AC Legarda-Ocampo.

"Every phase of Greenbelt has been a learning experience," says Ayala Malls marketing division manager Cathy Bengzon. "What we've learned through the years is that the Filipino market looks forward to innovation. Filipinos like to be surprised."

Grand entrance

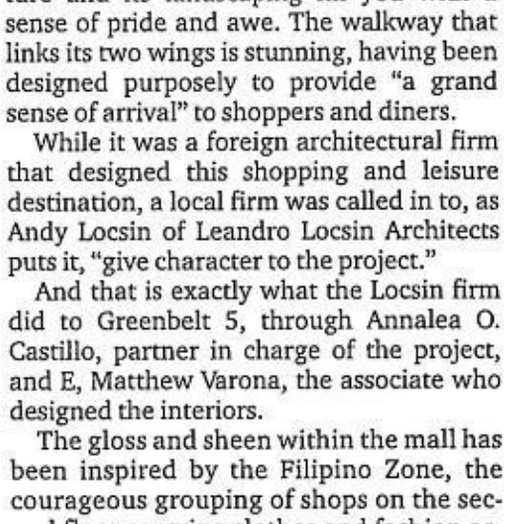
The last of the series, Greenbelt 5, is a gleaming, distinctive surprise. The structure and its landscaping fill you with a sense of pride and awe. The walkway that links its two wings is stunning, having been designed purposely to provide "a grand sense of arrival" to shoppers and diners.

While it was a foreign architectural firm that designed this shopping and leisure destination, a local firm was called in to, as Andy Locsin of Leandro Locsin Architects puts it, "give character to the project."

And that is exactly what the Locsin firm did to Greenbelt 5, through Annalea O. Castillo, partner in charge of the project, and E, Matthew Varona, the associate who designed the interiors.

The gloss and sheen within the mall has been inspired by the Filipino Zone, the courageous grouping of shops on the second floor carrying clothes and fashion accessories created by Filipino designers and those on the third floor that are dedicated to furniture and home accessories from Filipino designers and craftsmen. For the first time, local designers are not just lumped together in a dark corner of a

FIFTH/ E2

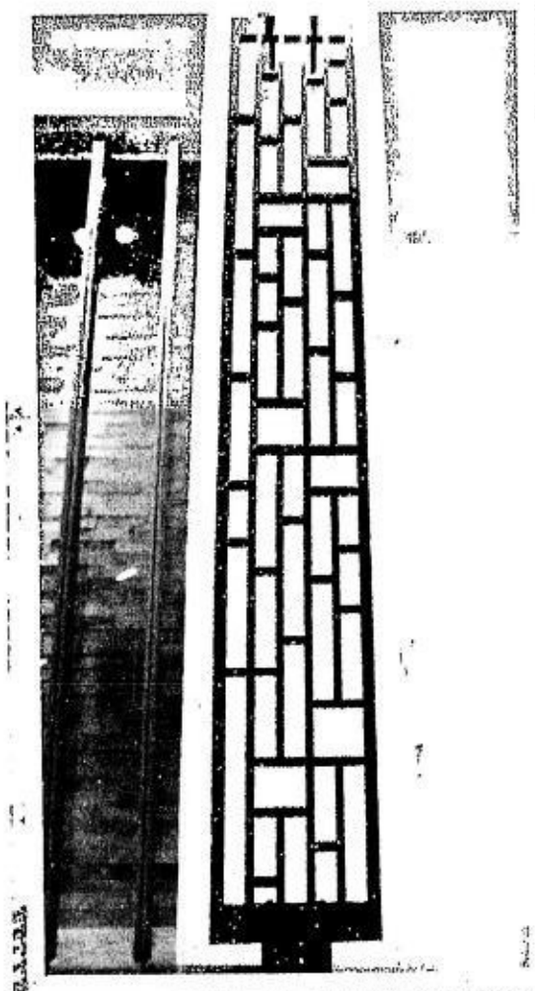


RAILINGS repeat the abstract woven theme of the panels.

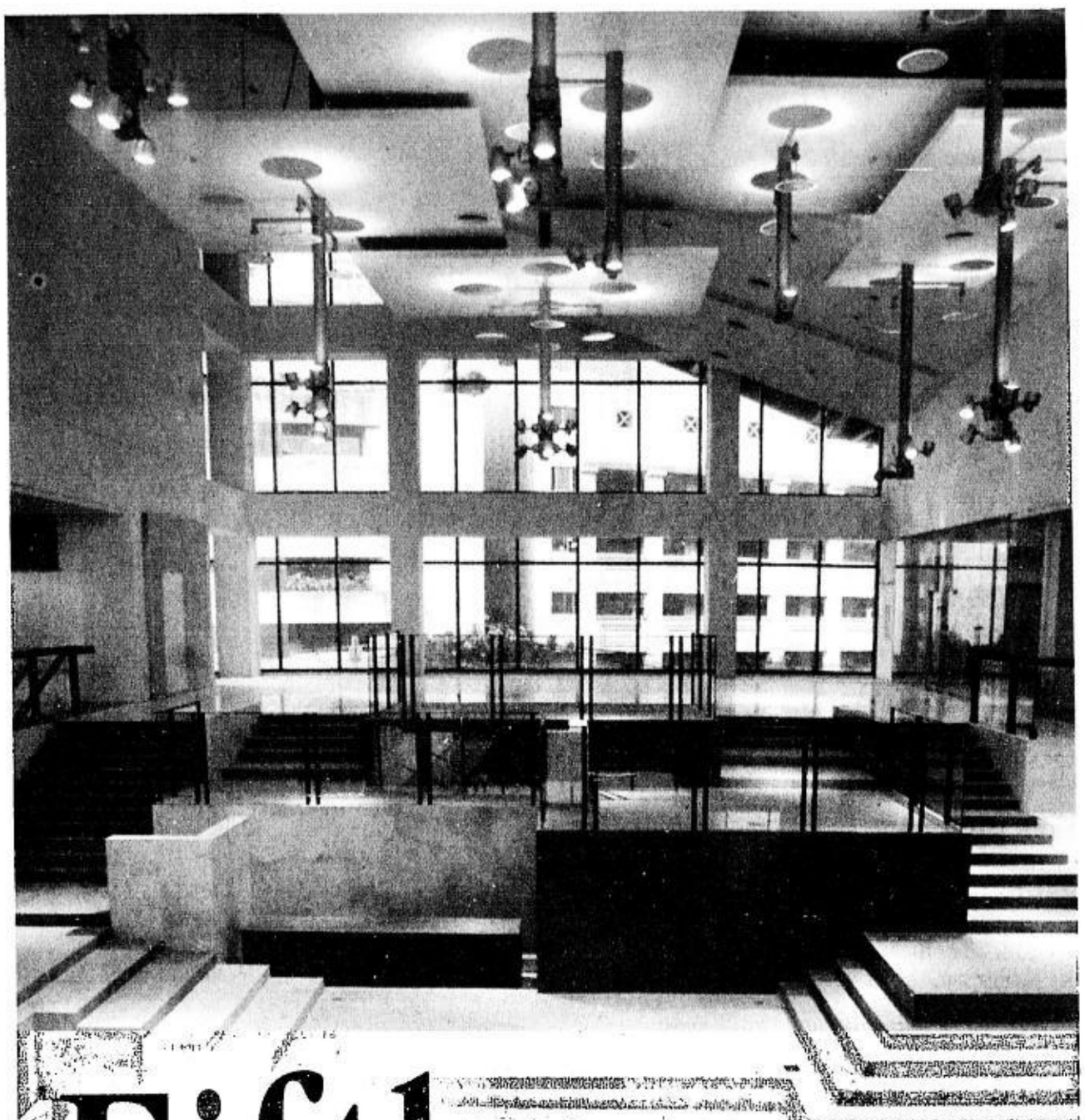
PHILIPPINE DAIL
Sunday Li

DESIGNING duo Annalea Castillo, partner in charge of the Greenbelt 5 project and (right) E. Matthew J. Varona sit at their favorite spot, the amphitheater, with Andy Locsin, who says his role has been mostly to "critique" ideas.

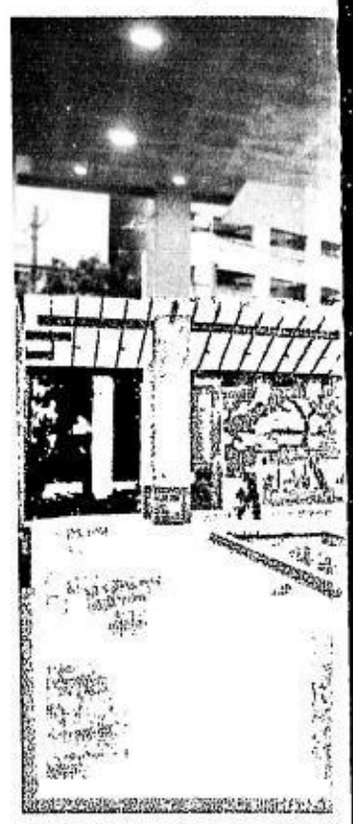
WOMEN who love malls, Ayala Malls that is: Cathy Bengzon, marketing manager; Cora Dizon, VP for finance; Rowena Tomeldan, VP and deputy group head; and AC Legarda-Ocampo, operations manager.

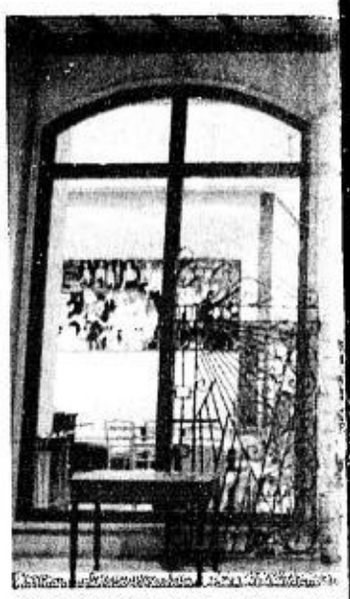


MAT WEAVE pattern showsin panels and railings throughout Phase I.



Fifth of a series—but not the least





WALKWAY between Phase 1, w and Phase 2, which houses Cha

GALLERY SEATING. The amphitheater of Greenbelt 5 confirms the new role of malls as social venues. Overhead are hanging lights directed at mirrors that bounce the light down for dramatic effect.

From page E1

department store.

"How do you approach the Filipino theme without doing it on an incredibly literal level? That was our concern," says Locsin. "We didn't want it to become campy."

Luckily, the firm's leanings have always been toward the abstract. Varona came up with modern interpretations of Filipino elements. Even the furniture that they brought in for the lounge areas are by Kenneth Cobonpue and Anne Pamintuan, two stalwarts of the trend-setting Movement 8 group of Filipino artists.

"Ayala wanted a Filipino Zone, so we put Philippine touches in the panels, the furnishings and the exterior screen that is inspired by the Tinalak," says Castillo. Mixed with the Filipino flavors are modern elements like hanging accent lights and walls covered with the amazing photography of Don Jaime Zobel. The flooring is a graphic pattern of imperial brown granite and natural stone.

"The nice things about this mall are really the details, the nooks and crannies," notes Locsin.

Plus the landscaping, one must add. Ponce Veridiano, the landscaper, scattered 20 pieces of carabao jars and planted the exterior grounds and the terraced gardens to pitogo, oliva, emperialis, pakpak lawin, zamio, sellum, philodendron, torch ginger, levistonia palm, royal palm, Eugenia, giant red crinum, aglonema, kamuning, red and pink ginger, miagos, tree fern, giant fern, spathyphylum and varied kinds of bamboo, the plant *du jour* for outdoor decorating.

BRIGHT and classy welcome and lounging areas (above and below)

Mixed use

Indoors, the configuration of Greenbelt 5 is 80 percent retail and 20 percent dining, according to Ocampo, to balance the offering of Greenbelts 2 and 3 which is mostly food. (Greenbelt 4 is all-shops because if you're buying a $2000 Gucci bag, the last thing you want is to smell curry or, worse, smell of it on your way in or out.)

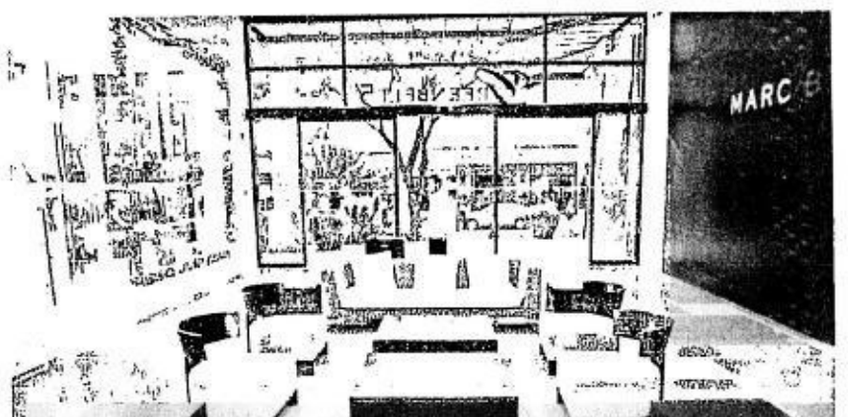
The centerpiece of Greenbelt 5 is the Filipino Zone, two floors showcasing Filipino creativity in fashion and home. "At par with the world's best," says Bengzon, referring to their juxtaposition of Filipino designs with international luxe shops.

On the second floor of the zone are the fashion shops. Ayala went one step further than just leasing the space to the most exciting Filipino designers today; it also had a hand in linking up these artists with seasoned retailers as business partners. For instance, Patrice Ramos-Diaz is in tandem with Ben Chan of the highly successful Bench group of companies. Randy Ortiz is teamed up with Ruby Gan who has proved her mettle in her shoe retail business called Schu. That kind of partnering.

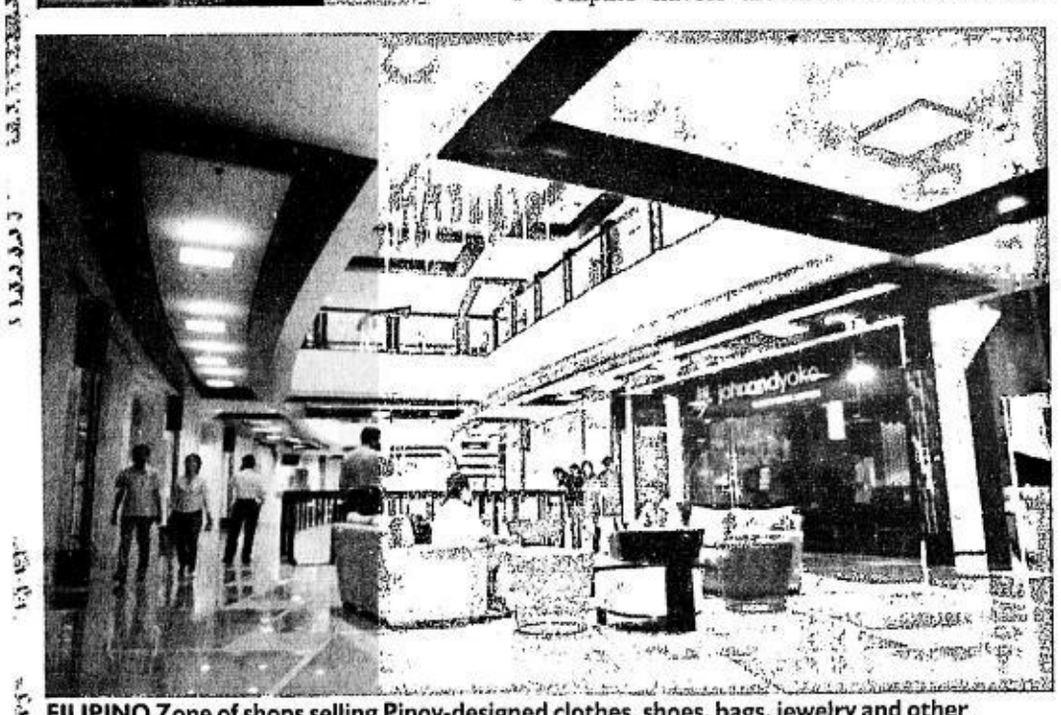
In the Filipino Zone, only Barba and Lila Almario are open, but busy putting the finishing touches to their shops are Aranaz, Arnel Papa, Rocks by Ana Rocha, Avatar, Gaupo, Jun Escario, Kate Torralba, Patrice Diaz, Religioso, Victoria Marin, Myth, Budji Layug, JT, L Manila and AC+632, which is owned by the Firma duo of Chito Vijandre and Ricky Toledo, the latter promising "We'll have a gardening section."

Now open on the ground floor of Greenbelt 5 are the flagship of Danish audio brand Bang & Olufsen, Kiehl's, Michael Kors, Celestina, Mix and dotdotdot. Also on the second level are David & Goliath and All Flip Flops. Shoppers are already being welcomed at Borders Home Accessories, Hives by Restoration and Prizxmic & Brill on the third floor.

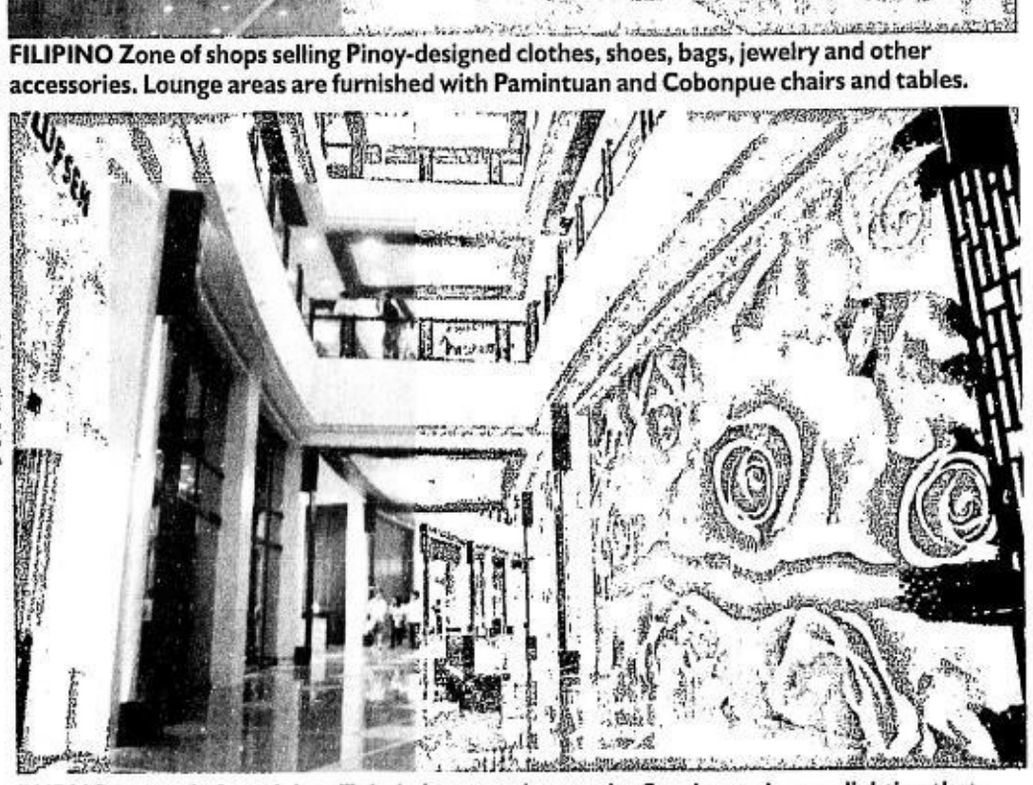
Most of the stores are raring to open and most probably will make it in time for holiday shopping—Banana Republic, Marc by Marc Jacobs, Bally, Ben Sherman, DKNY, Escada, Escada Sport, Furla, Kenneth Cole,



LANDSCAPED walkway leading to Greenbelt 3

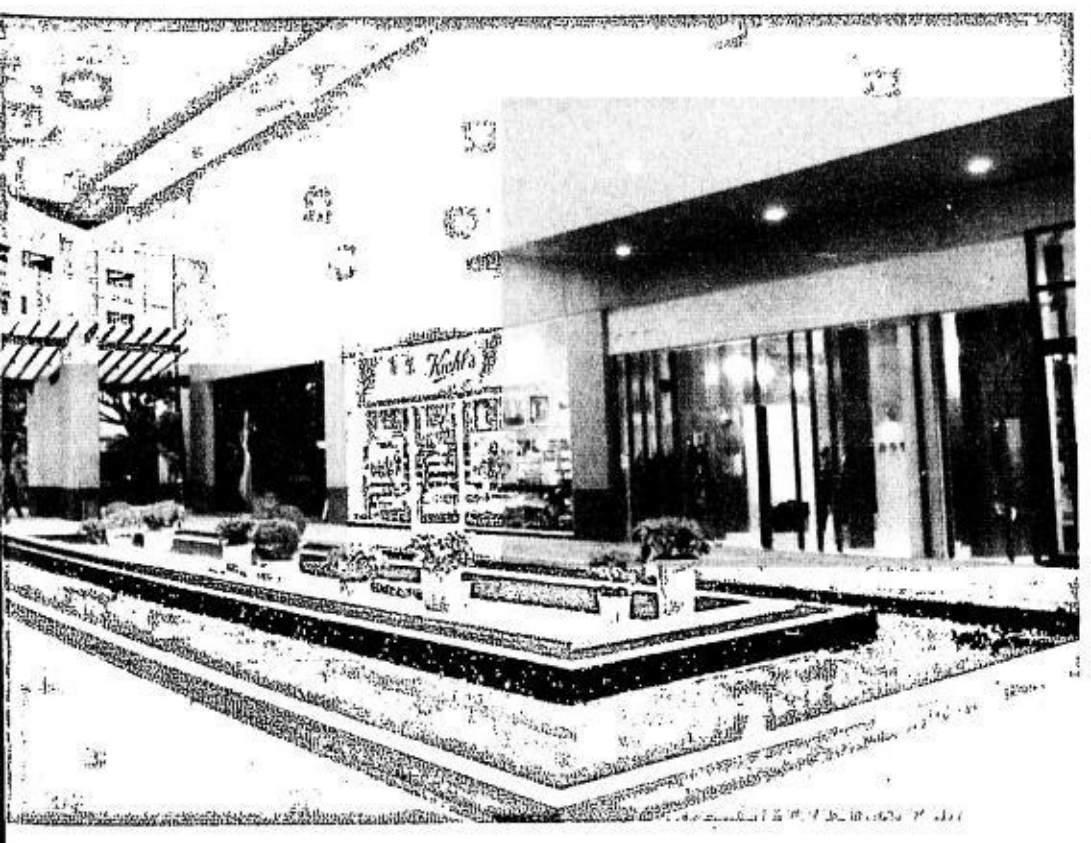


FILIPINO Zone of shops selling Pinoy-designed clothes, shoes, bags, jewelry and other accessories. Lounge areas are furnished with Pamintuan and Cobonpue chairs and tables.



PUBLIC art made from Jaime Zobel photographs, granite flooring and warm lighting that enhance wood in railings, panels and ceilings.

COMFORT ZONE. The well-appointed women's room. In the inner room is a mirror island.



hich is where Kiehl's pharmacy is (top photo)
eau 1771 fine dining restaurant (above).

Paul Smith, Rafe, St. John and Zara.

On the third are the furniture and home accessories stores, headlined by Budji Layug and his Movement 8 friends, Aguas, Designs Ligna, Domicillo, Galeire Hans Brumann, Voyages Home and Osmundo.

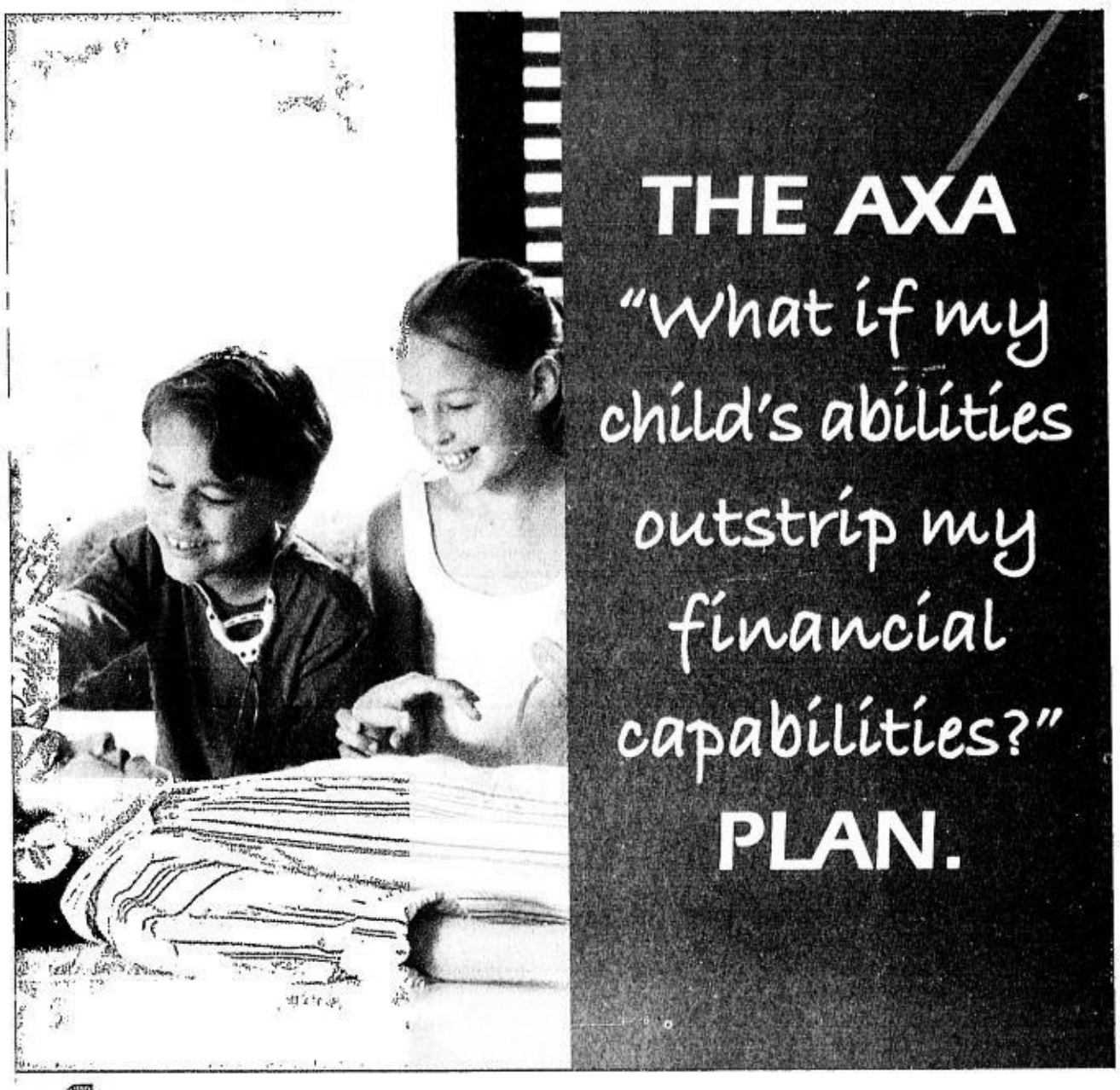
A 2,000-sq m fashion walk connects Phase 1 of Greenbelt 5 to Phase 2, which is going to house a boutique department store called Adora, probably the closest thing to an anchor shop that Greenbelt will ever have. Also in Phase 2 are shops for the age groups that the earlier Greenbelts have all this time ignored. Now kids, teens and tweeners can shop at Greenbelt 5. Plans for the third floor of Phase 2 include a family zone, a children's zone, and specialty shops for fathers and the home. The fourth floor will have a gym and a spa.

It is always a big challenge for developers to create a mix of restaurants that offer what other places don't. Among Greenbelt 5's original dining places are Pia Y Damaso (Spanish and Filipino) and John & Yoko (Japanese), both now open on Level 2; Grace Park by Margarita Fores; and Fish Out of Water.

Fronting the street on the ground floor are restaurants Chateau 1771, which moved here from its Ortigas location, Felix, Myron's Place and Zuni. Fast heating up their kitchens are Cibo, Classic Confections, Fely "J" Restaurant and Travel Café, La Maison and Solihiya.

Greenbelt 5 connects to Greenbelt 1 and Greenbelt 4, not to mention the Ayala Museum. Walkways link it to Greenbelts 2 and 3.

For now, Greenbelt 5 is open from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday to Sunday, but expect the hours to be competitive with other malls as soon as all shops, restaurants and services have opened.



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Thess Allen's feng shui ways to win Trivia 2

INQUIRER READERS, FOR THE second year will have a chance to win exciting prizes while discovering valuable information about the art and science of Feng Shui, the ancient chinese way of luck enhancement.

INQUIRER, in partnership with World Of Feng Shui Philippines (WOFS) together with the support of Smart Wolfpac and Washington Inc., is bringing back last year's most successful text promo called "Thess Allen's Feng Shui Ways to Win-Part Two."

The promo activity is in line with the third run of "Marites Allen Philippines Feng Shui Extravaganza Updates" on Jan. 19, Year of the Earth Rat at the Grand Ballroom of the New World Renaissance Hotel, Makati City.

The text trivia promo will allow readers to answer one question each day. The answer to the question can be found in a *feng shui* article to be printed in the Lifestyle Section of the INQUIRER.

To join, Smart, Globe and Sun subscribers simply have to submit a one-time registration by keying in THESS REG <name/age/address/gender> (Ex. THESS REG <Bona Sy/25/Marikina City/F) and send it to 2861. Only one registration per mobile number will be allowed. To send an entry, Smart, Globe and Sun subscribers simply have to choose from four possible answers to the question of the day. For inquries, call 9147888, 9147112, 412 6888 or 0920 950 9390.

Immaculate Conception Academy homecoming

WHAT FOOD AND ENTERTAINMENT value can P500 get you today? Well, if you were lucky enough to get a ticket to the recent ICA Batch '82 Homecoming, you would have been treated to a buffet dinner, free drinks and a dessert table with a chocolate fountain. In addition, you would have been treated to a musical and dance extravaganza of homegrown talents of ICA and friends and celebrities as well as a chance to win over a hundred different prizes.

Under the slogan "Slice of Life," ICA Batch '82 celebrated 25 years in the journey of life since graduation. They remembered those who had left them and expressed their thanks to their school and families.

ICAns from all over the country and the world gathered at ICA Greenhills to celebrate the *bayanihan* spirit. Many helped out and donated money to stage the event.

The Slice of Life magazine that was handed out highlights the multi-faceted lives of Batch '82 from the homemaker to the academic, the professionals and the businesswomen. It celebrates those who have dedicated their lives to the service of others and those who have made sacrifices in order to help mold and shape the lives of our future leaders. It's about a group of Filipina-Chinese girls who graduated 25 years ago and went on to conquer big and small worlds.

Major sponsors of the ICA homecoming were Marie France Bodyline International, Facial Care Center, Audio Visual Driver Inc, Topbest Printing and Astoria Plaza. Proceeds of the event will go to the ICA Scholarship Foundation and the ICA Alumnae Association.

12 animal signs in the Chinese zodiac

By Marites Allen

IN THE CHINESE CALENdar, the start of the year falls somewhere between late January and early February, depending on the cycles of the moon. It is also cyclical, meaning it is repeated time after time according to a pattern.

A popular folk method which reflects this cyclical method of recording years is the use of the twelve animal signs. These animals have been in use since time was officially recorded during the reign of the emperor Huang Ti, around 2637 BC. Every year is assigned an animal sign and the cycle repeats itself in this particular order: Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Sheep, Monkey, Rooster, Dog, and Boar. Therefore, every twelve years the same animal sign would reappear.

Many legends, and variations in the different legends, surround the choice of the animals featured in the Chinese horoscope, and why some animals have been omitted. Essentially, however, these tales have three general versions.

Legend No. 1 - The Feast of Buddha

One popular version traces it to a myth involving Buddha who, before leaving this world, invited all animals to his birthday feast. For unknown reasons only twelve animals arrived. Thus, Buddha decided to name a year after each of these animals, based on the order of their arriva - the Rat being the first, and the Boar, last.

Legend No. 2 - The Jade Emperor's Choices

Another version has it that the Jade Emperor who ruled the Heavens and had never been to Earth wanted to know what the different animals looked like. He then summoned his chief adviser to gather the 12 most interesting animals so he could grade them according to colors and shapes. The adviser decided to invite the Rat, and asked him to invite the Cat. He later gave invitations to ten other animals and asked everyone to present themselves to the Emperor early the following morning.

The story goes that the rat became insecure about his looks compared to the cat, so in an act of cunning, he let the cat oversleep and therefore miss the meeting with the Emperor. The following morning, only eleven animals lined up for the Emperor's inspection. A servant was hastily sent to Earth to catch the first animal he sees to complete the 12 animals. On a country road, he spotted a farmer bringing a pig to market. The Pig was then brought to the parade.

Bent on making a good impression, the Rat jumped onto the Ox's back and played the flute. For this effort, the Emperor gave him the first place. For his generosity in allowing the Rat sit on his back, the Ox was awarded second place. The courageous looking Tiger got third place, while the Rabbit got fourth place because of his fine, white fur. The powerful looking Dragon placed fifth and the sinuous snake was sixth. The Horse got seventh place because of his elegant bearing, and the Ram eighth because of his strong horns. The next three slots went to the Monkey for his agility, the Rooster for having fine feathers, and the Dog for being watchful and protective. At the end of the line was the Pig, who may not be as interesting as the others, but was nevertheless given the 12th place.

Of course, when the Cat learned about what happened, he was very furious with the Rat, and this is said to be the reason these two animals are such fierce enemies.

Legend No. 3 - The Great Animal Race

The third version talks of a competition organized by the King of Heaven where all animals were invited to cross the other side of the Lo River. The first twelve to reach the other side were to represent the years of the calendar then being designed. Being such poor swimmers, the Rat and the Cat asked the Ox if they could stay on his back. Midway through the race, the Rat pushed the Cat into the river and when the Ox was nearing the finish line, the Rat jumped off and became the first animal to reach the shore. Close behind were the Ox, the Tiger, and the Rabbit. Coming in fifth was the Dragon, who could have finished first because of his ability to fly, but was held back because he had to help the poor rabbit reach the shore. The Snake and the Horse finished sixth and seventh, respectively. The Sheep (or the Ram), the Monkey, and the Rooster helped each other during the race and for their combined efforts were given the 8th, 9th, and the 10th place. The Dog, despite being a good swimmer finished 11th because he took advantage of the race to get a good bath. Finally, after taking a nap, the Pig (or the Boar) went on to the race and became the 12th and last animal in the zodiac cycle.

Trivia question

1. According to one of the legends about the Chinese zodiac signs, who among the following invited different animals to his birthday feast?
   a) Huang Ti
   b) Buddha
   c) The Jade Emperor
   d) The Emperor's adviser

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2007

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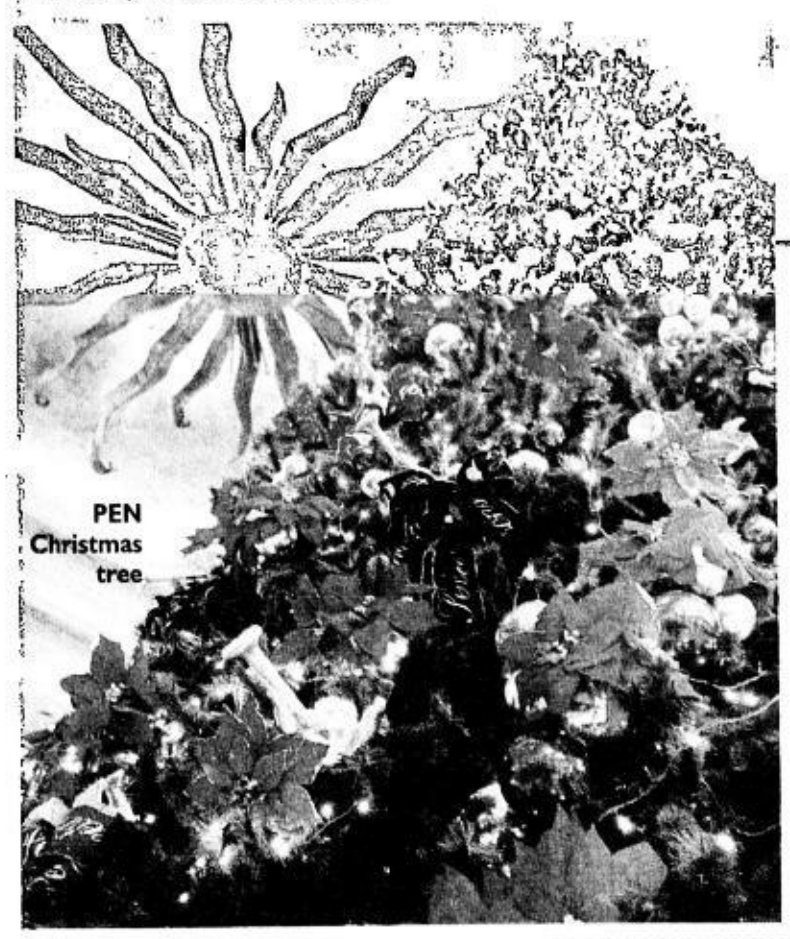

PEN Christmas tree

PHILIPPINE Philharmonic Orchestra I

Grand concert ushers in holiday season

IT IS "BUSINESS AS USUAL" AT THE PEN, despite last Thursday's unfortunate drama. The 24th edition of "Christmas Concert at the Pen" will be held Dec. 8, 5 p.m. at the hotel's lobby.

The much awaited concert will feature the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra (PPO). Guest conductor Ruggero Barbieri will be flying in from Italy for the concert. Also featured are The CompanY and the University of the Philippines Concert Chorus.

Co-sponsoring the event are The Peninsula Manila and Stores Specialists, Inc. Also supporting the project are Philippine Tatler, CATS Motor, Cultural Center of the Philippines, RS Wood Industries, Inc., Pampanga Block Builders Inc. and EC Paulino Construction Co., Inc.

Barbieri, who was music director and principal conductor of the PPO for eight years, has prepared a repertoire designed to lift the spirits and get people in the mood to celebrate the Christmas season.

The program includes seasonal favorites like the "Hallelujah Chorus" from Handel's "Messiah," Dvorak's "Slavonic Dance" and Strauss' "Morning, Noon and Night in Vienna."

The CompanY, accompanied by the PPO, will perform "I'll Be Home for Christmas," "Heto na Naman," "The Christmas Song," "Deck! Deck! Deck! The Halls." "Adeste Fideles" and "Joy to the World," among others.

The PPO, the country's leading orchestra, is widely regarded as one of the top musical ensembles in the Asia Pacific. Under its current music director and principal conductor Eugene Castillo, the orchestra has had a busy year that included its concert season September-April, regular performances at the San Agustin International Music Festival, special concerts and outreach shows.

It has played under the baton of many of the world's renowned conductors, including Mendi Rodan, Piero Gamba, Yaacov Bergman and Nicholas Koch. It has also performed with top Filipino and foreign artists like Cecille Licad, Lea Salonga, Martin Nievera, Regine Velasquez, Rachelle Gerodias, Van Cliburn, jazz pioneer David Benoit and British pianist and composer Rolf Hind.

The PPO has performed in major concert halls in Madrid, Vienna and Prague. In 2002, it was one of five major orchestras from the Asia-Pacific region that participated in the Asia Orchestra Week held at the Tokyo Opera City Hall.

The CompanY was formed in 1985 by the alumni of the Ateneo College Glee Club. It started as backup vocals for the country's pop stars of the '80s before headlining its own concerts.

The University of the Philippines Concert Chorus or UPCC is the official choir of the State University. Under Prof. Janet Sabas-Aracama, artistic and musical director, the group does the ChoreoCapella, which stands for choreographed, a cappella style of choir singing.

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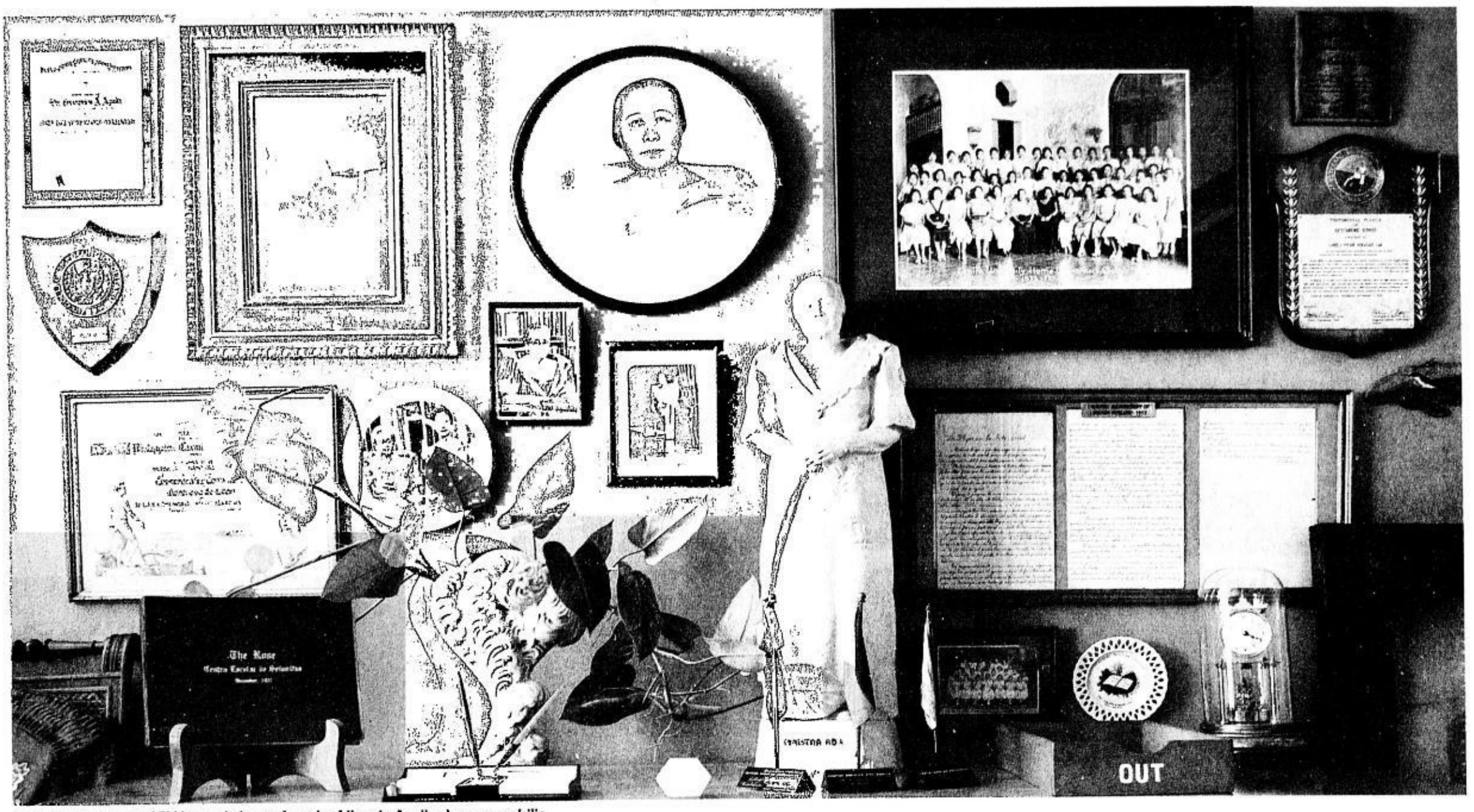


THE PINK room at CEU has a shrine to founder Librada Avelino's memorabilia

'Pink' university is 100

CEU remains committed to Ciencia y Virtud (science and virtue)

Photos by Neil Lucente

CARMEN de Luna (center) helped Avelino start CEU 100 years ago.

THE TERNO was the "uniform" for special occasions in the school's early years.

MENDIOLA STREET IN MANILA'S University Belt may be better known for protest marches and clashes between anti-government groups and the police and military.

But, despite the occasional war-like atmosphere, a building painted in pink still looks serene, seemingly unaffected by it all.

The building is the centerpiece of the Centro Escolar University complex.

But why is pink the color motif of Centro Escolar University? The story began 100 years ago. Pink, specifically flamingo rose, was the favorite of CEU founder Librada Avelino, according to Encarnacion Alzona, her biographer.

CEU started as the Centro Escolar de Señoritas. In "Traversing the Road: Centro Escolar de Señoritas 1907-1941," Dr. Leonila S. Castro, CEU religion and humanities teacher, said the Educational Act No. 74 in 1901 during the American regime allowed the establishment of private schools.

Becoming a licensed teacher even before she was 20, Avelino first taught in a public school for girls and later became principal of the Pandakan Girls' School.

Later, with Carmen de Luna, another pious woman who believed "to be a Filipino is to be religious," she put up Centro.

The two women adopted "Ciencia y Virtud" (science and virtue) as the school's slogan.

THE PHILIPPINE postal servicehas issued special stamps to commemorate CEU's centennial.

Humble beginnings

The women and lawyer Fernando Salas started their school in a small rented house on Calle Iris (known later as Azcarraga, and now Recto) on June 3, 1907.

A hundred years later, CEU not only owns its campus on Mendiola but has also opened schools in Malolos, Bulacan; and Gil J. Puyat Avenue, in Makati City.

To celebrate its 100th founding anniversary, CEU lined up activities throughout the school year 2007-2008, starting with a Thanksgiving Mass at the Manila campus chapel, on June 3.

The Mass was followed by a 100-vehicle motorcade that went to all the campuses. The vehicles were, naturally, adorned with pink balloons and buntings.

The CEU Centennial Committee chaired by Dr. Rosita Navarro has lined up other events designed to showcase the diversity of CEU's interests and achievements, and how the school has influenced not only in Philippine education but other important areas.

Reinforcing its commitment to science was the launch of the Centennial Science Research compendium and the Lecture Series on Century of Life Sciences. The series has covered so far Overview of the Ethical, Legal and Social Aspects of Biology; Renewable Sources of Energy; the GMO Link in Food and Food Products; Emerging Science in Genetic Testing; Pharmacogenomics; and Animating Biology through Popular Science Writing and Broadcasting. The rest of the lectures will be on Ophthalmic Bacteriophage Therapy: The Invincible Microbes, Dec. 13; Ecotoxicology and Bio-remediation, Jan. 12; Biology and Culture in the 21st Century, Feb. 28; The Holistic Approach to Aging, March 13; The Role of Biology in Aesthetic Dentistry, April 2; and Bioinformatics, May 23.

International events

The Manila campus is also hosting the International Scientific Conference on Natural Products for Health and Wellness, Jan. 24-26; and the International Conference on Periodontics, April 24-25.

A Tourism Festival; Mini-Chefs on Parade by the Hotel and Restaurant Management; Research Forum, Symposium and Photo Exhibit; Centennial Foodfest, Winning Moments Towards 100 Years, and Hundred Markets Trade Fair.

CEU Makati in Legazpi Village was blessed on Independence Day.

The university that produced top concert stars under the tutelage of Alfredo Buenaventura, Lucio San Pedro, Antonio Molina, Francisco Buencamino, and Felipe de Leon, lived up to its reputation as a patron of the arts, particularly music and theater Arts.

The ELAMS (School of Education, Liberal Arts, Music and Social Work) Conservatory of Music Marching Band led the centennial flag-raising ceremony on June 4, the day after the official start of the centennial celebration.

On the same day, the university opened the Museum and Centennial Exhibit, a rare collection of memorabilia depicting CEU's history.

The centennial musical "Sampung Dekada ng Tinig at Musika" was presented last Friday.

Just as it remains committed to science, CEU is also unwavering in pursuing its goal of instilling virtue in its students.

The virtue of loyalty is celebrated through moving tributes to its founders and leaders.

In July, the CEU community pledged loyalty to its seventh president, Dr. Ma. Cristina D. Padolina, during investiture rites at the Librada Avelino Auditorium.

Honoring the founders

Historical markers honoring university founders have been installed in buildings, parks, and streets.

On Jan. 19, markers will also be placed at the Plaza Librada Avelino and Librada Avelino Elementary School in Tondo, Manila.

De Luna was honored with the installation of a marker on the Carmen de Luna street in Malolos, Bulacan, in July. Another marker was installed on Concepcion Aguila street in Manila in September. Aguila was dean of Graduate School and Teacher Training. The school marks its annual Loyalty Day on Sept. 11, Aguila's birthday.

On Dec. 26, a marker will be installed on Dionisio C. Tiongco Street in honor of CEU's fourth and only male president so far.

On May 24, 2008, Pilar Hidalgo Lim, CEU's third president, will be honored with the installation of a marker.

Though the Graduate School alumni and students had a centennial get-together in June, a grander reunion, the Centennial Alumni Homecoming, will be held Dec. 15. Outstanding local and overseas alumni will be honored.

The fund-raising campaign for the CEU Centennial Legacy Fund for Scholarships and the Alumni Directory will be launched on the same day.

A Centennial Pink Ball to be held May 31, 2008, will pay tribute to Centennial Escolarians.

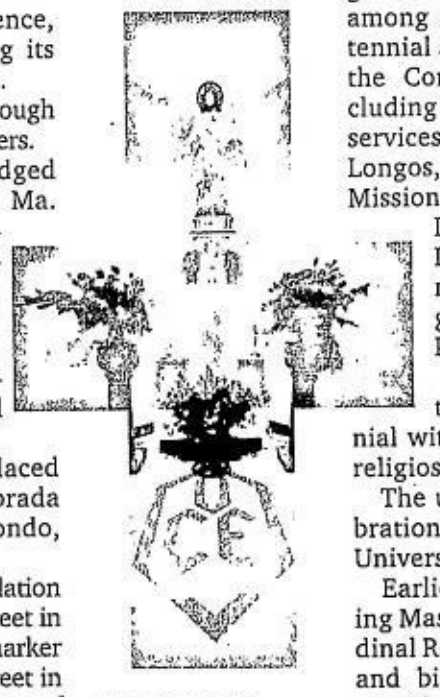
Charity missions, in keeping with CEU's goal to instill charity or love for the poor among its students, are also on the centennial anniversary agenda. They include the Community Outreach Program including free medical, dental and optical services for disadvantaged residents of Longos, Malolos City; Integrated Medical Mission in sitio Kapalaran, Barangka Drive, in Mandaluyong City today, Dec. 2; Doctors Go to Sitio, in partnership with Sukob Inc. in Barangay 649, Zone 68, Bagong Lupa, Port Area, Manila, Dec. 9.

Imbued with its founders' piety, the school cannot mark its centennial without a demonstration of its deep religiosity.

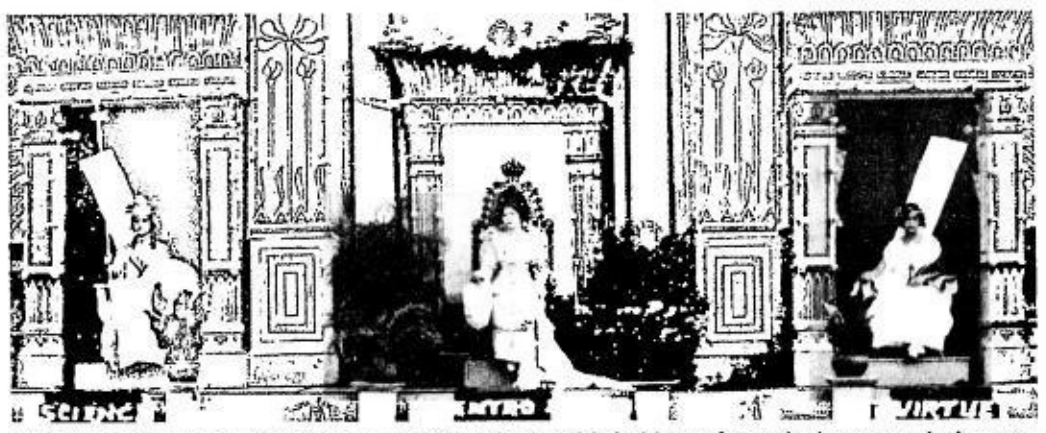
The university held a Eucharistic Celebration in June for the Reconsecration of University to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Earlier in January, a special Thanksgiving Mass was held with Gaudencio B. Cardinal Rosales, D.D., archbishop of Manila, and bishop Angel N. Lagdameo, D.D., president of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), and other guest priests, presiding.

Cardinal Rosales presented the Papal Award, Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice to CEU on behalf of Pope Benedict XVI. He acknowledged the university's outstanding service in spreading the Gospel and putting God in the heart of every student.



THOUGH CEU was a secular school, religion was a major part of the curriculum, and devotion to the Sacred Heart was propagated.



CEU students were among the country's first beauty-title holders, often reigning as carnival queens.

Storied Cebu hotel welcomes new manager

CEBU CEBU
Jaime Picornell

MONTEBELLO VILLA HOtel has a new general manager, affable **Ma. Christina "Baby" Ignacio**. She has a wealth of experience working in hotels here and abroad and many endearing qualities, foremost of which is charm.

A party was given in her honor at Montebello's El Jardin by **Paquito Borromeo**, chief finance officer; his sister **Zelia Borromeo**, managing director; and their nephew **Gerard B. Guilatco**, assistant general manager.

"Why just me as an honoree?" Baby asked. "It would be nice to have all the department heads, too."

Many department heads have been with Montebello for decades and well known to the hotel's media friends. They include:

Nitz Cera, sales; **Cecile Apuhin**, front office; **Alice Quirante**, credit and collection; **Nenita Amellabon**, accounting; **Amy Muana**, personnel; **Evelyn Tangarorang** and **Lincoln "Abe" Gaid**, food/beverage service and production, respectively; **Maritess Cuyos**, housekeeping; **Rey Corbo**, maintenance; and **Ramon Piencenavez**, banquets.

It was a lovely evening of conviviality and excellent cuisine, Montebello being known for its Spanish and Filipino specialties.

Media friends included **Julius** and **Nelia Neri** from Sunstar, with **Cookie Newman** and **Chinggay Utzurrum**; the Freeman's **Joe Recio** and **Honey Loop** who also writes for Philippine Star.

Art exhibit

On-going at Montebello until December is an art exhibit featuring the works of 36 aspiring artists who took part in a recent on-the-spot painting contest. Theme was "Pasko sa Sugbu" or "Christmas in Cebu." Participants are Grades 4-6 students from public and private schools.

Winners were announced by Gerard G. who acknowledged the efforts of the judges: Chinggay U., who studied fine arts at the University of Sto. Tomas; **Celso Pepito** and **Sonia Yrastorza**, founder and president, respectively, of the Cebu Artists Inc., to which many prominent painters belong.

First prize, by unanimous decision, went to **Elenei Pulido** of St. Theresa's College. Second and third prizes went to **Rogelin Alegrado** and **John Lyndon Labra**, respectively, of the Guadalupe Elementary School.

Honorable mentions were **Lupe John Andrino**, Guadalupe Elementary School; **Joan Demegillo**, Marie Ernestine School Talamban campus, and **Frederick Cobarde**, University of San Carlos elementary department.

Ikebana classes

Also ongoing at Montebello are classes on Ikebana, the Japanese art of floral arrangement, conducted by **Zelia Borromeo**. She is an accomplished painter and a passionate gardener. For almost 40 years now, she has been at the forefront of Ikebana in Cebu, and has taken courses here and in Japan.

The classes are being held Tuesday and Thursday afternoon until Jan. 24 at the hotel's El Portico. Participants will be featured in a grand Ikebana exhibit on Jan. 27 at Montebello, where else?

They will also be added to the membership of the Ikebana International Cebu chapter currently headed by **Carmen Go**.

Veteran Ikebana members, as well as the future "graduates," are anticipating the visit of an eminent professor from Kyoto towards the end of February. He will conduct a three-day workshop at Montebello.

Many people in Cebu and elsewhere have fond memories of Montebello, which opened on a rainy Valentine's Day in 1972 with an al fresco dinner. The drizzle did not dampen the guests' spirits. Dinner went ahead under the striped awnings on the terrace. A troupe of drenched dancers swayed to hula music.

Montebello was originally designed as a sports club with five guest rooms. In less than five years it became a full-fledged hotel. Well within the city's periphery, it has a rural and bucolic charm. Surrounded by a large shopping mall and an upscale subdivision, it is an oasis with its flower gardens and lush trees.

A thick scrapbook recorded many memorable events. In 1974 **Amparo Muñoz**, crowned Miss Universe in Manila, came with her four runners-up. Their handprints and signatures are still on a cement slab near the pool.

Some years later, Hollywood star **Cliff Robertson** and wife, the ethereal **Dina Merrill**, also a Hollywood movie queen and often listed among the world's best dressed, were brought by a rickety taxi from the airport. Dina is the daughter of one of the most prominent American philanthropists, **Marjorie Merriwether Post**.

In 1982 Montebello's grounds was the venue for the first Santacruzan held in Cebu as a fund raiser. **Angelita Lhuillier**, with a diamond coronet as Reina Emperatriz, was escorted by **Henry Lhuillier**. Holding their *arco* were their sons **Michael** and **Philippe** (now the Philippines' ambassador to Italy), as well as grandchildren **Michael** and **Charles**.

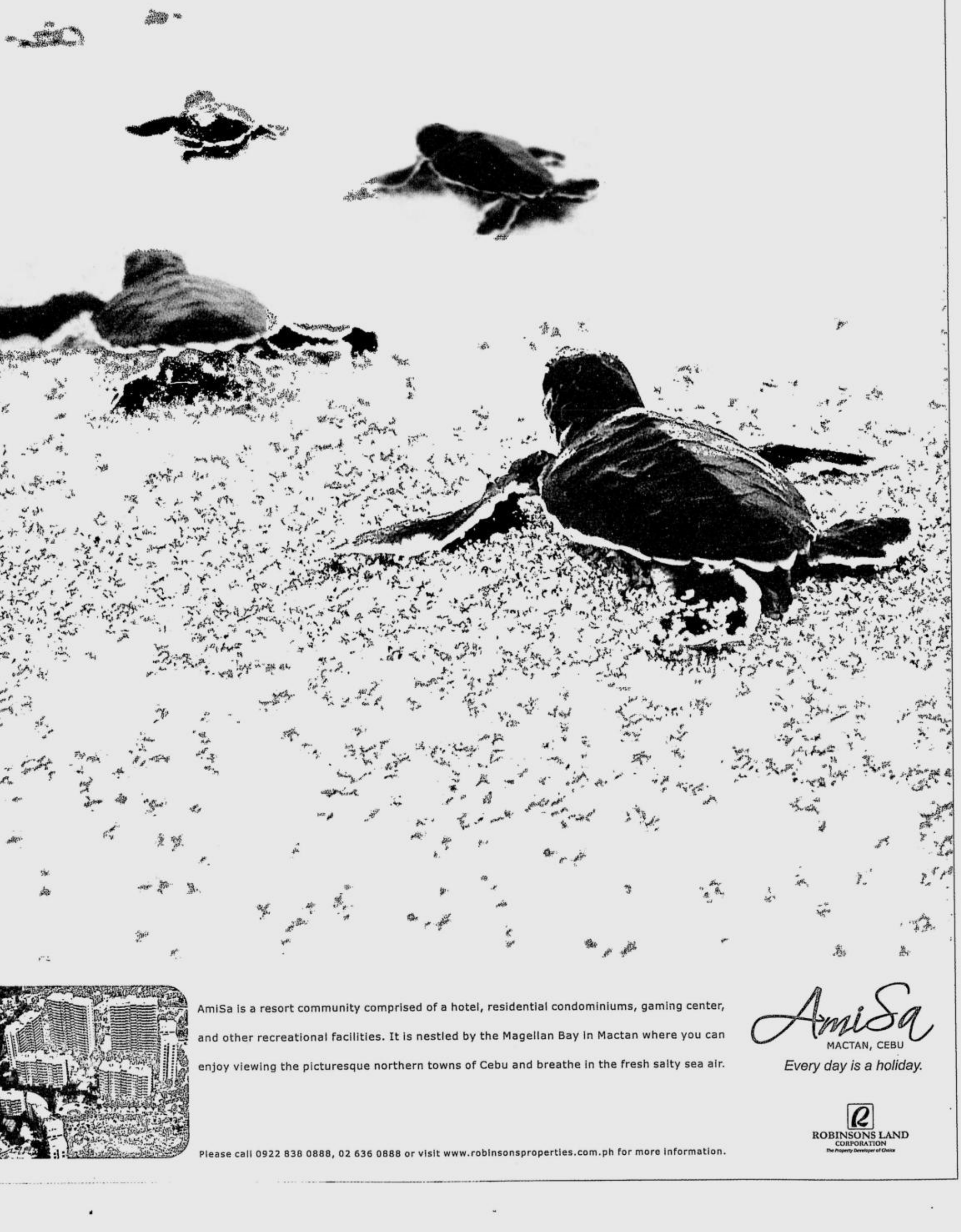
Reina Elena was **Ana Maria Escano**. Her little cousin **Paolo Manguerra** was Emperador Constantino.

Asked if she would open the dance with a waltz, Angelita L. opted for a disco number. That set the mood for the evening.

MONTEBELLO general manager Baby Ignacio with Alice Quirante and Honey Loop.

MONTEBELLO'S assistant general manager Gerard Guilatco, managing director Zelia Borromeo, and Amparito Borromeo Guilatco (Gerard's mom).

Rush Hour



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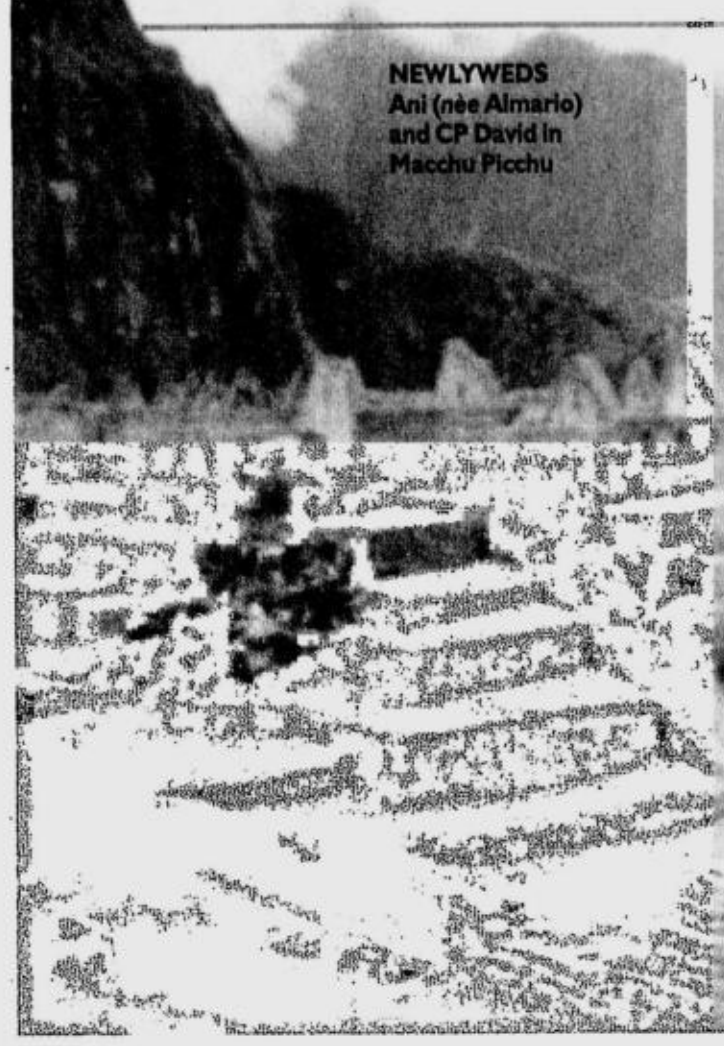

NEWLYWEDS Ani (nèe Almario) and CP David in Macchu Picchu

High in the Andean mountains, a Pinoy geologist and a Pinay children's publisher exchange vows

DAVID-ALMARIO NUPTIALS

A wedding in Cuzco, Peru

By Karina Africa Boiasco
Contributor

IT COULD HAVE BEEN A WILD IDEA TO get married in Peru. But the young couple, Ani Rosa Almario and Carlos Primo "CP" David, usually think out of the box and brim with hope that anything is possible.

It comes from the confidence of having accomplished more than usual so early in life. They had seen it, raised by parents who measure the meaning of their lives by their contributions to the wellbeing of the nation.

CP is a geologist, with masters and doctorate in Geology from Stanford. He knew how rich science could be but instead of doing research for some multinational to develop a golden product, he stayed on the side of education. How those massive rock

A WEDDING/ G2

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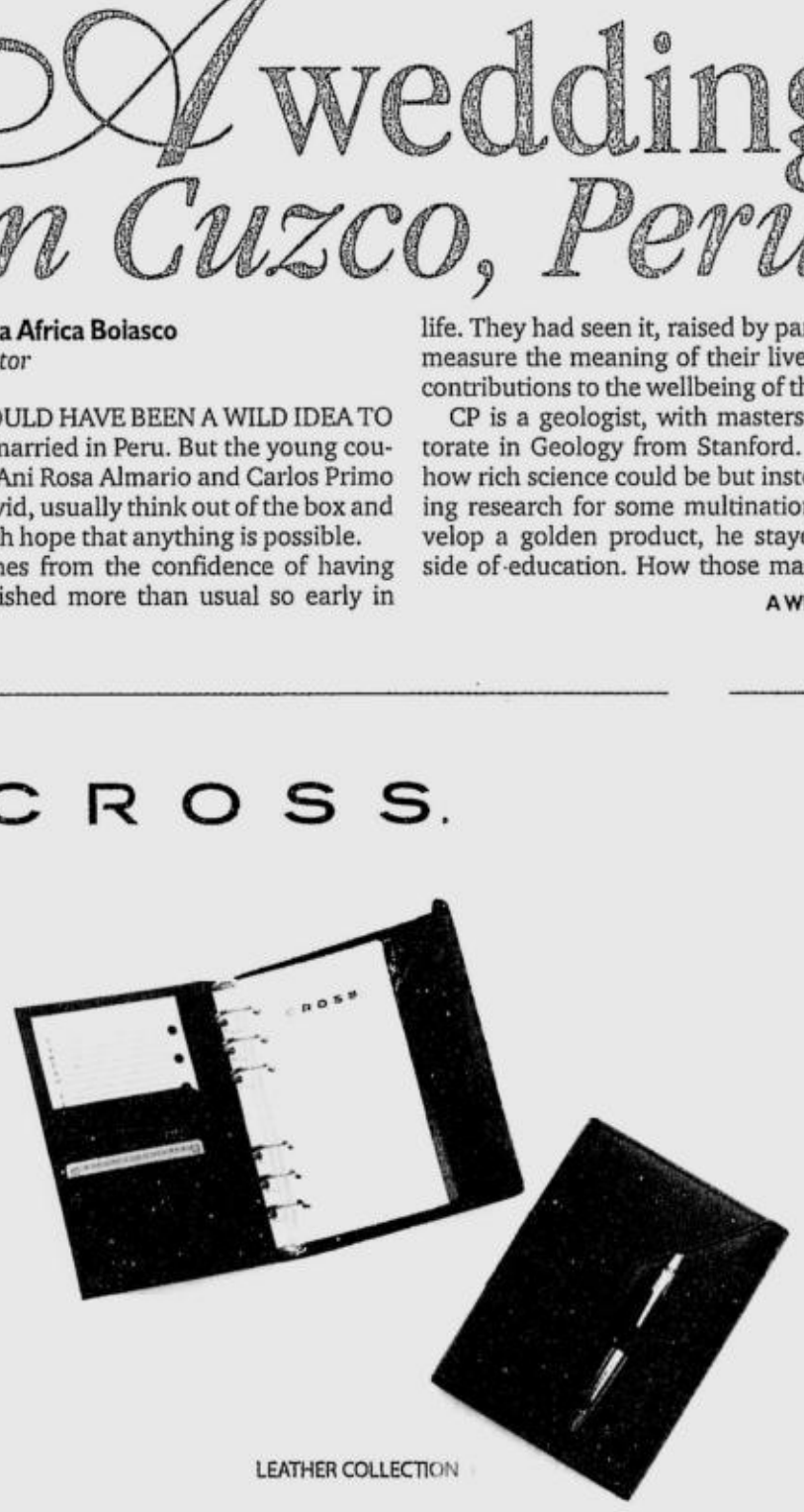

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A wedding in Cuzco, Peru

From page G1

formations in Peru must have stirred CP's mind and heart!

Ani took over Aklat Adarna, the largest children's book publishing house in the country and professionalized it. She has also developed precious references for children, parents and educators.

In the beginning, perhaps not by choice but more out of filial duty, she took over her father's (National Artist Virgilio Almario) post as secretary general of the Philippine Board on Books for Young People, and for four years has competently and almost single-handedly steered it forward. Ani is also a Fulbright alumna of Stanford specializing in Education Technology.

Ani and CP, with other friends, formed in 2005 a preschool called Raya, distinct for not merely paying lip service to that noble goal of all schools: instilling in children pride in being Filipino. The first thing children learn in Raya is to connect the dots which form the Philippine flag and to color it. Science and Reading are equal in importance.

I always thought that being Almarios and Davids, they must have met in the University of the Philippines Integrated School despite the seven-year age difference. Their fathers, Rio and Randy, are UP professors. But they only met in Stanford—CP had been there for five years when Ani came for her Fulbright.

Randy said at their civil-wedding reception in Quezon City (a concession the couple agreed to grant their parents) that in the parking lot of the Faculty Center, Rio asked him if his son was still in Stanford. Randy gave Rio CP's e-mail in case Ani found herself in some kind of emergency.

NINANG Karina Bolasco, Randy and Karina David, CP and Ani, Lyn and Virgilio Almario

Ani had left a boyfriend in Manila and CP had similarly broken off with a girl. Not long after, they were always together, at work and at socials.

I instinctively knew right away they were soulmates. They are not given to public displays of affection but some plane of strong energy bound them together. It was palpable.

Ancient Inca capital

They could not have chosen a more enchanting city to be married in. Cuzco is an interesting combination of robust geography: fertile Andean valleys and imposing mountains descending to the edge of the jungle where the temperature rises and the vegetation is rich.

This ancient capital of the Inca empire, declared a Unesco World Heritage Site in 1983, was an important ceremonial location where the Incas celebrated annually the festival of the sun.

THE NEWLYWEDS with the choir

Cuzco is a labyrinth of narrow cobbled streets and perfectly aligned stone walls with houses and inns and "ostales" of colonial architecture.

The view from the Plaza de Armas, the main square, is breathtaking. I understood why Cuzco is considered the navel of the world—it is like entering the world for the very first time.

Two grand churches sit like queens on this plaza—the main cathedral whose façade and interior are in the renaissance style with a wealth of carvings in cedar and alder. The cathedral holds an important collection of paintings from the Cuzco School and repousse silverwork.

The other church is the La Compania de Jesus, (Jesuit), built in 1571, destroyed by the 1650 earthquake and rebuilt after. Its original outline and façade are examples of Andean baroque style.

It has a three-part main altar blinding in its grandeur, impressive twisted columns and pulpit of wood ornately carved and numerous baroque; *plateresque* (of Spanish architecture, lavish ornamentation); and *churrigueresque retables* (after Jose Churriguerra, Spanish architect of the 1600s, who used the classics in an unconventional way by distorting them, such as twisting columns).

Coming together

It is said that it was in this very church that the triumphant brilliant Spanish soldier Martin Garcia de Loyola married the niece of Tupac Amaru, the last Inca ruler defeated by the Spaniards in 1572.

We certainly don't know the circumstances of this union but our own Spanish colonial experience could instruct us that the woman was clearly a conquest, the reward for De Loyola's victory.

She was baptized and renamed Beatriz Clara Coya. It could also be symbolic: a marriage of two cultures just as CP and Ani's marriage is a coming together of two intellectual elites and traditions—literary and scholarly.

This is where Ani and CP took their wedding vows before two Filipino priests, Fathers Allen Aganon and Roel Arcega, both assigned to different villages in a province by one of the mountains, eight hours away from Cuzco by bus.

Machu Picchu, the late Minister of Energy, Geronimo Velasco, a family friend of the Davids, declared he knew a priest, whose studies he supported, based there and could make arrangements. Father Allen came home to visit last year and so the plan was firmed up.

On the morning of the wedding day, Oct. 19, the five of us went to the church to meet the priest.

What we expected to be a simple ceremony turned out to be most touching and romantic. A choir of young Peruvian singers sang a wedding march.

CP and Karina were first to walk down the aisle, and when near the altar, CP paused and stood there in his barong, waiting for his bride. Ani, in a simple piña dress, marched, escorted by Rio. The Mass was in Spanish but the ceremony was in Filipino.

Touching

When the couple stepped out of the church, the choir was standing at the bottom of the steps singing Italian and Spanish love songs. Ani cried, overjoyed by the warmth of strangers.

A crowd began to gather behind the choir and cheered for the couple on the steps, just like in the movies. I heard the crowd whisper, asking if the couple was Chinese. They were surprised to know we were from Filipinas, a country they most likely had not heard of. Or it didn't really matter as Cuzco was used to having guests from all over the world.

In Cuzco's main plaza, where foreign and domestic tourists congregate till the early hours of the morning, I had a deep sense of not just people gathering here but also that many small lights and joys inside people's hearts connected, too.

They create so bright a light that illumines and makes others feel warm and light just being in this cold mountain city. In this breathtaking square, a couple breathlessly in love takes and seals their commitment to a marriage that is sure to make them breathless many times over.

And when the times get tough or rough, the only thing to hold on to, always, if I as godmother can gift them with some piece of advice, is that which brought them together in the first place: love and everything it stands for and will stand for all through the years.

Even if National Artist Almario wrote them a poem that starts with "Por Dios por Santo," expressed in thick exasperation when he read it at the reception, alluding to this risky venture called marriage.

For love fundamentally involves an often incomprehensible combination of understanding and misunderstanding. For there are as many ways of loving as there are people in the world and as there are days in the lives of these people.

The author runs Anvil Publishing and is the Peru godmother of the couple.

CP IN Macchu Picchu

SELPHY
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He ran to SELPHY because he only had a moment to make sure his grandfather leaves with a smile.

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CP750

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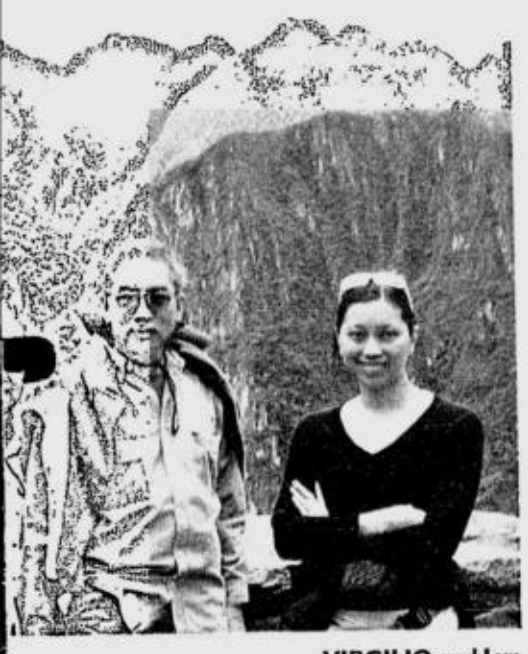

VIRGILIO and Lyn Almario, Karina and Randy David with Ani in Macchu Picchu

THE BRIDE'S father, National Artist Almario, surrounded by children in Cuzco

ANSWER TO SUNDAY CROSSWORD

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2007 Holiday Ad Campaign by PUMA® Features G1FT-BOT-07

A Robot Is Caught up in the Spirit of Giving

PUMA® introduces its 2007 Holiday Ad Campaign featuring the unique G1FT-BOT-07 character, helping consumers with their holiday shopping. With a simple white background, the G1FT-BOT-07 is depicted in a variety of activities ranging from stitching, sewing, packing, wrapping and mailing popular PUMA holiday items including footwear, apparel and accessories.

The visuals are accompanied by a small computerized G1FT-BOT "receipt" graphic that includes the article name and a short message from the robot itself to consumers about the product such as: "chic"... "stylish"... "Sweet" ... "snug" or "slick."

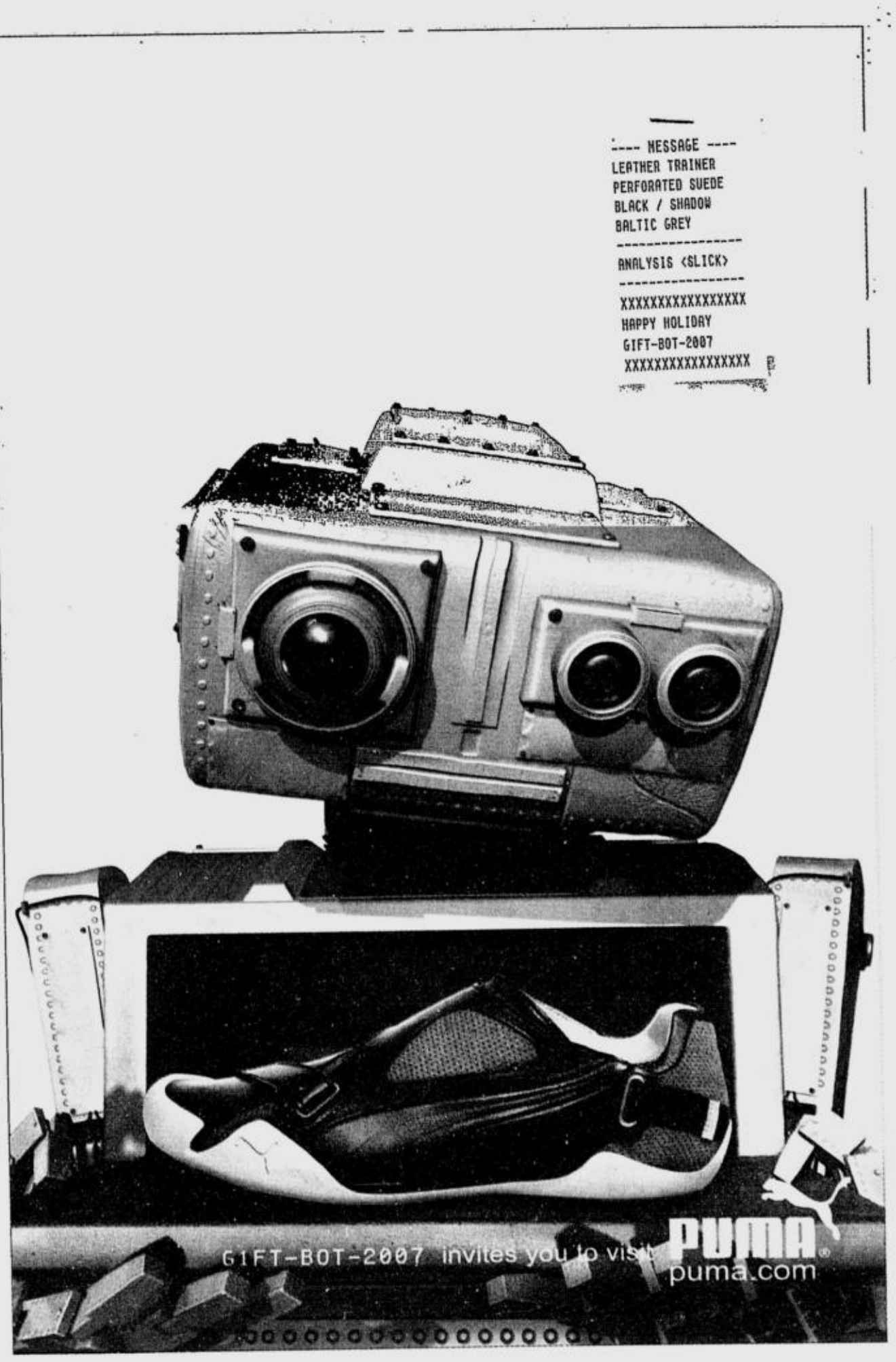
Items featured in the campaign are PUMA footwear such as Shanghai Metro, Yin Women's as well as apparel such as the Duffle Jacket, Jean Clare Tee, Courier Bag.

Check out the PUMA 2007 Holiday collection available at PUMA stores at at Bonifacio High Street, 2nd Level Glorietta 4, 2nd Level Trinoma, Upper Ground Level Festival Supermall, Ground Floor Limketkai Mall, 2nd Level Gaisano Mall of Davao and 2nd Level Robinsons Bacolod.Also available in leading department stores and shoe outlets nationwide.

PUMA® is the global athletic brand that successfully fuses influences from sport, lifestyle and fashion. PUMA's unique industry perspective delivers the unexpected in sportlifestyle footwear, apparel and accessories, through technical innovation and revolutionary design. Established in Herzogenaurach, Germany in 1948, PUMA distributes products in over 80 countries. For further information please visit www.puma.com.

Yin Women's

Shanghai Metro



Come Home for Christmas

Come home to InterContinental Manila where Philippine holiday traditions are cherished. Relive the magic of the Season the Filipino way. For reservations and more information on hotel holiday offers, please call 793 7000 or visit our Holiday Lobby Desk, open from 10:00 AM to 7:00 PM until December 31, 2007.

Holiday Diary

Here are dates to take note of this season.

December 1, 2007 to January 6, 2008
7:00 AM - 10:00 PM, Jeepney Deli Shop
- Sale of Christmas goodies and hampers

08:00 AM – 09:00 PM, Café Jeepney
- Bibingka and Puto Bumbong

December 16 to 24, 2007
06:30 PM – 07:00 PM, Hotel Lobby
- Concert of Christmas Carols

December 24, 2007
06:00 PM – 12:00 MN, Café Jeepney
- Christmas Eve Dinner Buffet (P 1,600/person)

07:00 PM
- Christmas Eve Mass

07:00 PM – 11:00 PM, Prince Albert Rotisserie
- Christmas Eve Dinner Set Menu (P 3,250/person, P 1,850/child under 12 years) An a la carte menu is also available.

December 25, 2007
11:30 AM – 02:30 PM, Hotel Lobby/Restaurants
- Meet and Greet Santa

11:30 AM – 02:30 PM, Café Jeepney
- Christmas Day Lunch Buffet (P 1,600/person)

12:00 NN – 03:00 PM, Prince Albert Rotisserie
- Christmas Day Lunch Set Menu (P 3,250/person, P 1,850/child under 12 years) An a la carte menu is also available.

06:00 PM – 10:00 PM, Café Jeepney
- Christmas Day Dinner Buffet (P 1,600/person)

07:00 PM - 10:00 PM, Prince Albert Rotisserie
- Christmas Day Dinner Set Menu (P 3,250/person, P 1,850/child under 12 years) An a la carte menu is also available.

December 31, 2007
06:00 PM – 12:00 MN, Café Jeepney
- New Year's Eve Dinner Buffet (P 1,600/person)

06:00 PM - 10:00 PM, Club InterContinental Lounge
- New Year's Eve Cocktails and Dinner (Exclusively for Club InterContinental and suite guests)

07:00 PM
- New Year's Eve Mass

07:00 PM – 10:00 PM, Prince Albert Rotisserie
- New Year's Eve Dinner Set Menu (P 3,250/person, P 1,850/child under 12 years) An a la carte menu is also available.

08:00 PM - 01:00 AM (Jan. 1, 2008), Gambrinus Bar
- New Year Countdown Celebration Featuring Margarita Saludo and sax player Ray Ama (P 600/person minimum charge)

11:00 PM - 04:00 AM (Jan. 1, 2008), Bahia
- New Year Countdown Masquerade Party with Cocktail Buffet Music by Rhythm & Babes Band (P 1,200/person)

January 1, 2008
06:00 AM – 10:30 AM, Café Jeepney
- New Year's Day Breakfast Buffet (P 900/person)

11:30 AM – 03:00 PM, Café Jeepney
- New Year's Day Lunch Buffet (P 1,600/person)

06:00 PM – 10:00 PM, Café Jeepney
- New Year's Day Dinner Buffet (P 1,600/person)

07:00 PM – 10:00 PM, Prince Albert Rotisserie
- New Year's Day Dinner Set Menu (P 3,250/person, P 1,850/child under 12 years) An a la carte menu is also available.

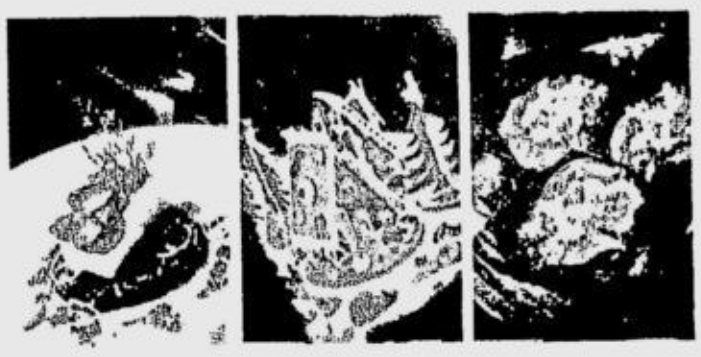
For reservations and more information on our holiday offers, please call 793 7000 or visit our Holiday Lobby Desk from November 15 to December 31, 2007, 10:00 AM to 07:00 PM.

Quoted food prices are inclusive of VAT and are subject to 10 % service charge and .8 % local government tax.

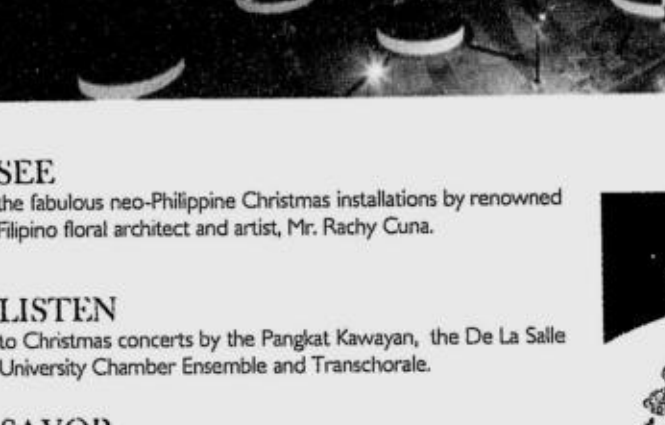
SEE
the fabulous neo-Philippine Christmas installations by renowned Filipino floral architect and artist, Mr. Rachy Cuna.

LISTEN
to Christmas concerts by the Pangkat Kawayan, the De La Salle University Chamber Ensemble and Transchorale.

SAVOR
popular local and international delicacies and gourmet meals by Executive Chef Patrick Fournes and his team.



AVAIL
of Paskong Pilipino room packages for local and returning (balikbayan) residents at nightly rates of P 5,500 (Deluxe Room), P 6,500 (Executive Room), P 7,500 (Club Room) and P 9,000 (Junior Suite). Other suite category rates are offered too. Inclusive to these packages are *Filipino breakfast buffet for 2 at Café Jeepney * Shopping privileges and discounts at SM Makati's KULTURA upon presentation of hotel-issued voucher * cold sago at gulaman welcome drink upon hotel arrival * 50 % discount on admission fees for two at the Ayala Museum * free parking * complimentary local newspaper * free use of hotel gym facilitiesand swimming pool.



Club InterContinental guests will have access to the top floor Club Lounge where they can take their complimentary breakfast, afternoon tea and cocktails, use the internet workstations and the private conference room (subject to availability), and enjoy butler service. Other Club entitlements are free pressing of one garment and a 15 % discount on massage services.

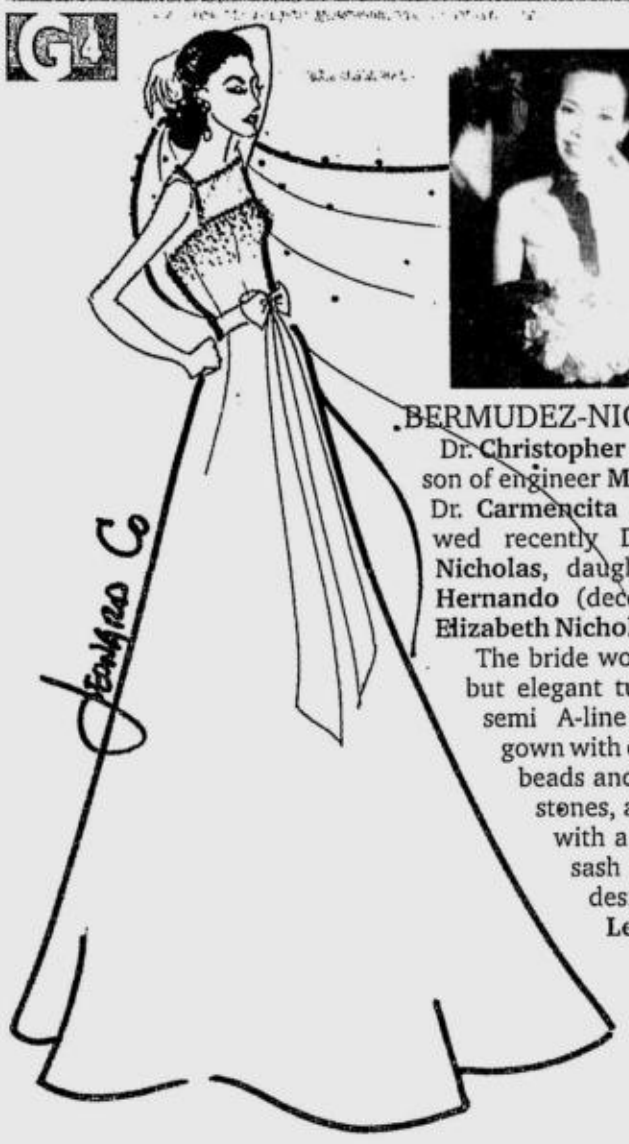
Optional: Hop-On, Hop-off Cultural Heritage Tour/Shopping and Leisure Tour See Manila's historical landmarks and major tourist attractions in the company of an experienced tour guide onboard an air-conditioned Filipino jeepney. Tour passes at P 300 each are available at the Concierge Desk for hotel guests.

Package validity is from December 1, 2007 to January 6, 2008 except on December 31, 2007. Guaranteed reservations on or before December 10, 2007 will get a FREE BUFFET LUNCH FOR TWO at Café Jeepney with their package. *Package rates are inclusive of VAT and are subject to 10% service charge and .6% local government tax.*

Rotunda

INTERCONTINENTAL. MANILA

DOT Accreditation No. H-029-2007



Milestones

We welcome announcements of weddings and engagements. Submit names of engaged couple, names of parents, date and place of wedding, and gown designer along with a photo of the couple and a sketch of the bridal gown, if any, to the INQUIRER, P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City. E-mail to lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph. A photo of the bride and groom is required if the wedding has already taken place. Announcements will be printed depending on space availability and at no cost to the senders.

BERMUDEZ-NICHOLAS

Dr. **Christopher Bermudez**, son of engineer **Modesto** and Dr. **Carmencita Bermudez**, wed recently Dr. **Haidee Nicholas**, daughter of Dr. **Hernando** (deceased) and **Elizabeth Nicholas**.

The bride wore a simple but elegant tube bustier, semi A-line bias ecru gown with crystal glass beads and Swarovski stones, accentuated with a matte gold sash and bow designed by **Leonard Co.**

GIBLIN-MERCADO

Michael Francis Giblin, son of **Thomas** and **Denise Giblin** will wed **Genevieve Lou Sy Mercado**, only daughter of **Nib** and **Lou Mercado** on Dec. 1, 3 p.m. at Chapelle Notre Dame de Vie, Basilica Chapel at Fernbrook Gardens in New Alabang. The bride will wear a piña gown with cathedral train, which is hand beaded with pearls, glass beads and crystals. The entire entourage was designed by **Letlet Veloso**. A dinner reception will follow at Fernbrook's Byzantine Gardens.

LOPEZ-ACA

Eric Lopez, son of **Filomeno** and **Merlene Lopez**, will wed **Jane Aca**, daughter of **Jose** and **Nelia Aca**, today, 3 p.m., at the Binondo Church. Reception follows at The Orchidarium and Butterfly Pavilion in Rizal Park.

DULAY-SANTOS

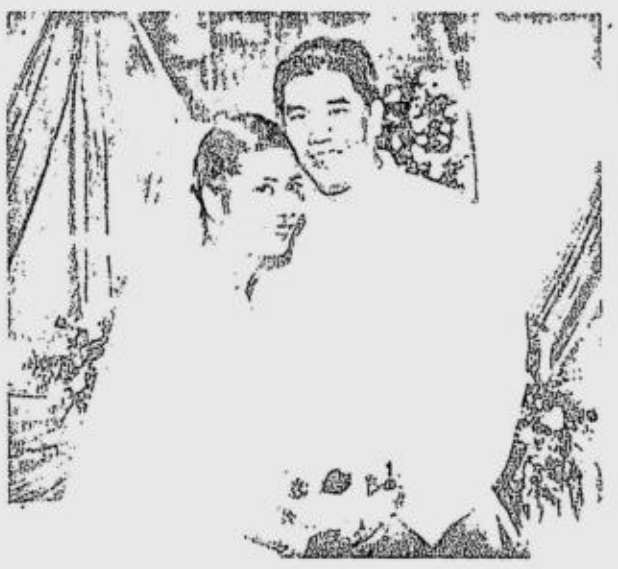
Noel U. Dulay Jr., son of **Noel** and **Cora Dulay**, will wed **Shereen S. Santos**, daughter of Dr. **Charlie** and Dr. **Adel Santos**, Dec. 8, 5 p.m., at the Chapel on the Hill, Nasugbu, Batangas. Reception will follow at Sonya's Secret Garden in Buck Estate, Cavite. The bridal gown is by **Pablo Cabahug**.

BORROMEO-SIY

Arnulfo P. Borromeo, son of **Angel** and **Pura Borromeo** of San Jose, Camarines Sur, will wed **Charina Vivian R. Siy**, daughter of **Roberto** (deceased) and **Dory Siy** of Nasugbu, Batangas, on Dec. 8, 10 a.m., at St. Francis Xavier Parish, Nasugbu, Batangas. Reception will follow at Dalampasigan Restaurant, Nasugbu.

NGO-ABU

Jefferson Ngo wed recently **Anna Marie C. Abu** at Diana's Garden, Patio Victoria, Intramuros, Manila.



SACLAMITAO-ACA

Frederick dela Torre Saclamitao, son of **Felipe** and **Epifania Saclamitao**, will wed **Judy Quiazon Aca**, daughter of **Justino** and **Elsa Aca**, on Dec. 8 at the Santuario de San Jose. Reception will follow at Oasis Pavilion.

VICTORIA-ESCLETO

Louie U. Victoria, son of **Lucio** and **Rosita Victoria**, will wed **Janice L. Escleto**, daughter of engineer **Eduardo** and **Elsie Escleto**, on Dec. 21 at Sta. Maria Church in Iloilo City. Reception will be held at Emillion Function Center, Road House Complex, Iloilo City.

PASKUHAN SA IMUS
Imus, Cavite, December
Contact: (046)4717222

PASKUHAN
Surigao City, December
Contact: (086)8268064

PASKO PASKI SA POLICARPIO
Mandaluyong City, December
Contact: 5339107

PASKO SA SUGBU
Cebu City, Whole month of December
Contact: (032) 2556354

GLOBAL FUN CARNIVAL
SM Mall of Asia Complex, Pasay City
December 2007-January 15, 2008
Contact: 401 4741 to 43

FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS
Kidapawan City, December 1-2
Contact: (064)4217803

PASKUHAN SA MARAYKIT
San Juan, Batangas, 1st Saturday of December
Contact: (043) 575 3210

CHRISTMAS SYMBOLS FESTIVAL
Tangub City, December 1 to January 6
Contact: (088) 3953130

RIMAT TIAMANAN
San Fernando City, La Union, December 1-18
Contact: (072) 8886006

GALICAYO FESTIVAL
Mangaag, Pangasinan, December 1-9
Contact: (075) 5290156

CHRISTMAS IN BAGUIO
Baguio City, December 1-31
Contact: (074) 4423939

BELEN SA MAKATI
Makati City, December 1-31
Contact: 8980277

LIGHT-UP BUTUAN FOR CHRISTMAS
Butuan City, December 1-31
Contact: (085) 3425601

PASADI (PASKO SA DIPOLOG) FESTIVAL
Dipolog City, December 1-31
Contact: (065) 2122485

KAMUNDAGAN FESTIVAL
Naga City, December 1-31
Contact: (054)811-3961

HUGYAWAN DALANSAYAW
Dumaguete City, Oriental Negros, 1st week of December
Contact: (035) 2251825

SUGBUAN FESTIVAL
Nasugbu, Batangas, December 3
Contact: (043)4120222

YUGYUGAN FESTIVAL
Pagsanjan, Laguna, December 3-12
Contact: (049)808 3544

ASIAN INTERNATIONAL REAL ESTATE EXPO AND CONFERENCE (AIREEC)
PICC, Pasay City, December 6-10
Contact: 525 9317 local 271

PAG-ALAD FESTIVAL
San Fernando, Romblon; December 7-8
Contact: 09194553077

KADAGAYAN FESTIVAL
Alamada, Cotabato Province; December 7
Contact: CP # 09167355709

FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS
CPU, Jaro, Iloilo City, December 7 to January 6
Contact: (033) 3291571

CHRISTMAS ADVENTURE
Ozamiz City, Dec. 7-Jan. 25
Contact: (088) 5213714

IMMACULATE CONCEPCION DAY
Cotabato City, December 8
Contact: (064)4217803

FEAST OF IMMACULATE CONCEPCION/ BURUNYUNGAN
Puerto Princesa City; December 8
Contact: (048) 433 2028

FEAST OF IMMACULATE CONCEPCION
Puerto Galera, Oriental Mindoro, December 8
Contact: (043) 4420182

SAN TEODORO FOUNDING DAY AND IMMACULATE CONCEPCION FEAST
San Teodoro, Oriental Mindoro, December 8
Contact: 0920 8631848

COCO FESTIVAL
San Teodoro, Oriental Mindoro; December 8
Contact: 0920 8631848

FLUVIAL PROCESSION AT TAAL
Taal, Batangas, December 8-9
Contact: (043)421 1060

SINADYA SA HALARAN
Roxas City, December 8-9
Contact: (036) 6215316

FLUVIAL PROCESSION AT TAAL
Taal, Batangas, December 8-9
Contact: (043) 4211060

REHIYON-REHIYON FESTIVAL
Mankina Sports Park, Mankina City, December 9
Contact: (02) 6463787

BONGGAHAN SA VALENCIA
Valencia City, Bukidnon, December 10 to 31
Contact: (088) 2222896

PAMPANGA DAY
City of San Fernando, Pampanga; December 11
Contact: (045) 9611780

PASTORES BICOL
Legazpi City, December 12
Contact: (052) 8203664

KARITON FESTIVAL
Tupi South Cotabato, December 15
Contact: (083) 2289837

SHARIFF KABUNSUAN FESTIVAL
Cotabato City, December 15-19
Contact: (064)4217803

BOD-BOD FESTIVAL
Tanjay City, Oriental Negros; December 16 - 17
Contact: (035)4158456

PASKUHAN
Tuguegarao City, Cagayan, December 16-25
Contact: (078)844-1449

CHRISTMAS AMONG THE TRIBES
Cabarroguis, Quirino, December 16-25
Contact: 078) 6825068

ARAW NG MONTALBAN/PAMINTINAN FESTIVAL
Rodriguez, Rizal, December 17-23
Contact: 9979931

PANAGYAMAN FESTIVAL
Balaoan, La Union, December 19-20
Contact: (072) 7942020

TAWO-TAWO FESTIVAL
Bayawan City, Negros Oriental, December 22
Contact: (035) 5310920

TAMBORA
Cummos, Ilocos Norte; December 23
Contact: (077) 7731995

MAYTINIS FESTIVAL
Kawit, Cavite, December 24
Contact: (046)4344550

STO. NIÑO FESTIVAL
Province of Bataan, December 25-January 1
Contact: (02) 5364809

PUTO FESTIVAL
Calasiao, Pangasinan, December 26-28
Contact: (075) 5172233

DAMILI FESTIVAL
San Nicolas, Ilocos Norte; December 26-30
Contact: (077) 7721696

SINUKWAN FESTIVAL
City of San Fernando Pampanga;
1st week of December
Contact: (045) 9611780

HUDYAKA SA MISAMIS ORIENTAL
Misamis Oriental, 2nd & 3rd week of December
Contact: (08822) 727275

KANYONG KAWAYAN FESTIVAL
Kidapawan City, 3rd week of December
Contact: (064)4217803

GIANT LANTERN FESTIVAL
City of San Fernando, Pampanga, 3rd week of December
Contact: (045) 9615022

PAWIL DAGUPAN
Dagupan City, Last week of December
Contact: (075) 522 7005

PAKANO FESTIVAL
Dumingag, Zamboanga del Sur; December 27
Contact: (062) 2142360

MAGTIPON - THE PHILIPPINE URBAN AND CULTURAL ARTS FESTIVAL
Clamshell, The Historic Intramuros; December 27-30
Contact: 897 4431

TULTUGAN FESTIVAL
Marsin, Iloilo, December 29
Contact: (033) 5210020

HORSE FESTIVAL
Plaridel, Bulacan, December 29-30
Contact: (044) 7950365

ALIKARAW FESTIVAL
Hilongos, Leyte, December 31
Contact: (053) 3362254

SCHEDULES OF THE FESTIVALS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

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Sunday LIFESTYLE

For feedback, e-mail us at lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph
Website: www.inquirer.net/lifestyle

Text us your feedback: Inquirer life name/age/ city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT G. RODRIGUEZ

In his book, 'No Mind Left Behind,' psychologist Adam J. Cox says a child's future success is determined by whether or not she has a sense of purpose

Purposeful and correctly driven life

By Queena N. Lee-Chua

MIKE WANTS TO WATCH his favorite TV show, but he has a quiz the next day. Fortunately, he has been reviewing the lesson for the past week, so after going over the topic one last time, he switches on the TV.

Jim, Mike's classmate, is immersed in a video game. Hours pass before he remembers the forthcoming quiz. He stays up late cramming for the test, and is so tired the next day that he forgets major details. He flunks the quiz.

It is tempting to label Mike industrious and Jim the opposite, but such labels don't help. After all, Jim stays up all night studying, hardly the trait of a lazy child. According to psychologist Adam J. Cox, the main difference between Mike and Jim is a sense of purpose. Purposeful action requires us to visualize a goal and find ways to achieve it. Mike has a two-fold goal—to ace the quiz and to watch his favorite show. Thus, he makes sure to review beforehand.

Julia wants to be a doctor in college. In high school, she volunteers at clinics and reads health books. Maria also wants to be a doctor, but her biology average is a D. She

PURPOSEFUL/ H4

DEL MUNDO EYE CLINIC OPENS AT TRINOMA

PEDIATRIC AND ADULT EYE CARE IN THE MALL

Parents and children don't have to go to separate clinics to get their eyes checked. Now they can get complete and thorough eye check up together in one location. Dr. Cynthia Del Mundo, a well-known UK and Japan trained pediatric optometrist and orthoptist opened her third clinic at the second level of TriNoma Mall, beside Seattle's Best, in front of Landmark near MRT Station.

Dr. Cynthia del Mundo with Special Guests Health Secretary Francisco Duque III, Rev. Eduardo Villanueva, Undersecretary Jade Del Mundo, Mari Kaimo, and Celebrity Patients Maricel Laxa-Pangilinan and Hannah Pangilinan.

The Eye Clinic is the first Orthoptic Center in the country, treating crossed eyes, walled eyes, double vision,"lazy" eyes, and visual dyslexia. It also offers treatment and referral of headache; treatment of Computer Vision Syndrome; treatment and surgery of eye diseases; refractive correction through eyeglasses, contact lenses and laser; control of abnormal progression of near-sightedness and astigmatism.

New Technologies

The Clinic boasts of having the first unit of the Huvitz Aberrometer/Refractometer. It is the newest technology available that allows an optometrist to refract an eye accurately in 30 seconds.

This technology is especially useful in accurately determining second order aberrations like astigmatism.

The clinic also has gadgets from UK, Japan and USA like the RAF Rule used for determination of near point of accommodation and Near Point of Convergence; Maddox Wing for eye balance test; Mallett's Fixation Disparity test; Hess Screen for testing paralyzed eye muscles; Amblyoscope to test binocular vision and eye muscle imbalances; Dunlop test and contrast sensitivity test for visual dyslexia; Humphrey's FDT Visual Field test for headache patients and those suspected of having glaucoma or neurological disease; Campimeter, Color tests Ishihara, D-15 and the Falant test; Stereo tests, Fresnel prisms, visual acuity charts for different ages of children.

Dr. Cynthia del Mundo is a Fellow of the Philippine College of Optometry and a Diplomate in Pediatric Optometry and Orthoptics. She is president of the Philippine College of Optometrists and lectures in local and international conferences. Her ophthalmologist associates are Drs. Mayette Alonzo, Elisa Fermin, Gerard Maceda, Jubaida Mangundato and Chris Verceles. Her optometrist associates are Drs. Victoria Dychioco, Christine Sipin and Jennifer Yu.

The clinic offers Christmas shoppers its Gift Certificates, from Php 500 up to Php 1,000 per certificate. The gift of better sight, the gift of more beautiful eyes, and the gift of being headache-free can now be given. Call 9015830 for more information or visit:

Heart Health and Nutrition According to Experts

Diseases caused by the hardening of the blood vessels and arteries, or atherosclerosis, now rank as the leading cause of death among Filipinos.[1]

In fact, the Philippines has the highest mortality rate for high blood pressure, also known as hypertension, in Asia. Our country is third to Japan in the incidence of strokes and fourth to Singapore for Coronary Artery Disease (CAD).[2]

High blood pressure and CAD have contributed to the rise of Cardiovascular Disease (CVD). Risk factors for hypertension and CAD include high salt intake, genetics, obesity, a sedentary lifestyle, hyperlipidemia or high levels of fat and cholesterol in the blood, illness, diabetes, smoking and stress.

To help prevent heart disease, experts recommend a lifestyle change. The guidelines of healthy living are simple: eating right, getting more physical activity, managing stress and having a positive outlook towards life.

Prescription for a Healthy Heart

According to Ana Dugang, Chief Dietician at the Makati Medical Center, heart disease is now more prevalent than it was some years ago.

"These may be attributed to the quality of food being served. With the occurrence of convenience food and fast food, a lot of people now realize that excessive consumption will lead to weight gain resulting in obesity and hypertension," she explains.

Dr. Ludgerio Torres, Cardiosurgeon and Medical Director of the Philippine Heart Center, agrees. "Cardiovascular disease is now the number one killer disease. This is due to the intake of fast food and junk food and a sedentary lifestyle. Salty and high cholesterol foods, as well as overeating, should be avoided."

Dr. Fernando Lopez, Executive Director of the Philippine Board of Surgery and Past President of the Philippine College of Surgeons, says that "numerous scientific researches have been conducted regarding nutrition and the important role it plays especially in patients undergoing treatment."

Eat to your Heart's Delight

To help control blood pressure and reduce the risk of heart disease, load up on the right fruits and vegetables, whole grains, plant-based oils, nuts and fish. Dairy products should be fat-free or low in fat. These types of food are low in cholesterol and rich in fiber and antioxidants. Nutritional drinks also play an important part in a person's over-all health. Dr. Lopez adds that "nutritional drinks hasten the recovery of patients after major operations, particularly for cancer. Usually patients do not have an appetite for food in the immediate post-operative days, thus we rely on nutritional supplements to augment their caloric requirements."

For heart-healthy nutrition, have a balanced diet supplemented with "nutrient-complete" products.

[1] http://www.doh.gov.ph/cardiovascular
[2] World Health Organization, 1990

(Shown from left to right: Dr. Fernando Lopez, Executive Director of the Philippine Board of Surgery and Past President of the Philippine College of Surgeons; Dr. Ludgerio Torres, Medical Director of the Philippine Heart Center; and Ms. Ana Dugang, Chief Dietician of the Makati Medical Center)

Lifestyle Modification with Ensure

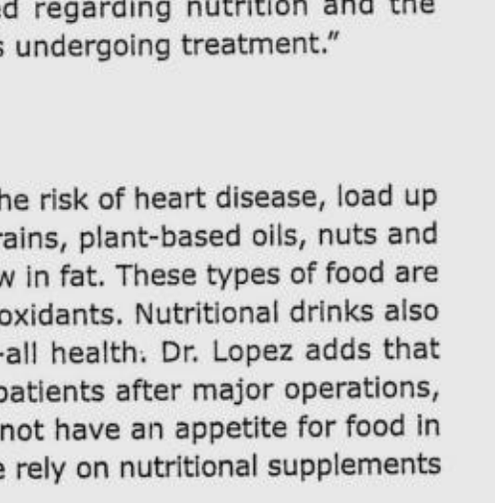
Ensure is a "nutrient-complete" product and can be used as a meal replacement or supplement. It has a unique combination of ingredients that is low in cholesterol and rich in fiber and antioxidants. Heart-healthy nutrition helps ward off hypertension, stroke and cardiovascular disease.

Experts agree that the first step to prevent the onset of CVD is to observe a healthy diet, exercise for at least 30 minutes every day and avoid stress.

Making healthy food choices is the cornerstone of heart disease prevention and control. For a proper diet, drink a glass of doctor-recommended Ensure everyday. It helps support your heart and your health because it's low in cholesterol and rich in fiber and antioxidants.

Ensure is available in creamy chocolate and delicious vanilla flavors at leading drugstores, supermarkets and groceries nationwide.

ENSURE *your life.*
ENSURE *your heart.*



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EMILY'S POST
Emily Marcelo

Should he stay or should he go?

DEAR EMILY,

I am 44 years old, an overseas Filipino worker based in the Middle East. I have been working here for the last 14 years.

Although I earn a modest salary, I am proud to say I have been able to provide a good life to my immediate family, my mother, parents-in-law, etc.

I was also able to construct a modest house that I share with my parents-in-law. I believe I have been a good provider although I do not have much in terms of savings.

My problem started when my wife and only daughter, who is 12 years old, returned home in April this year. I knew it was going to be difficult after 10 years of having them here. But I accepted my wife's decision.

I understand why she wanted to return home for good. First, she wanted to be by her ailing father who had a stroke several years ago. Second, my wife, a nurse, wanted to take review classes in preparation for the American state board examinations this December.

Since my family left, it has been a very difficult emotional transition for me. I feel so lonely. I never realized that coming home to an empty house was so painful!

I took a month-long vacation in May and a 10-day vacation this month. But these did not help.

I used to think I was tough but I'm wrong. It does not embarrass me to tell you that I cry every night. I miss my wife and daughter so much.

I do not know how long I can endure the separation. A month ago I suffered from severe depression. I am now undergoing counseling.

I hardly sleep at night and have lost my appetite. I am afraid I am beginning to lose my mind.

I want to resign from my job and go home to be with my family. I already drafted my resignation letter to take effect in January. But I have not submitted it yet.

I think I am being selfish if I leave. What will happen to all those who rely on me for financial support? Do you think it will be unfair if I went home?

I have paid up the high school educational fund of my daughter. She is in first year high school.

I have little savings that will last us for the next two years. I believe it will do me good emotionally to go home.

I can accept a job in the interim no matter how small the salary as long as I am with my family. But the salary may not be enough to share it with other relatives.

I also bought a car on installment in 2006 and still have 14 more months to pay. If I quit my job now, I will be unable to pay the monthly mortgage and forfeit previous payments. Apart from that, it may cause embarrassment to my family.

But I do not care anymore. I just want to be with my family.

To me this is the only important thing.

AU

A woman who lost her house and everything in it—furniture, top-of-the-line appliances, haute couture clothes, photographs from generations ago, 14 vintage cars, etc.—in a blazing fire, said philosophically it was not suffering if you merely lost material things.

In your case, the vacuum created by the departure of your wife and daughter has transformed you. You are like a cork in a big ocean—going neither here nor there.

What is disturbing is how it seems to have destabilized your personality. Not being able to sleep or eat is not good at all.

And, despite counseling, you still feel the emptiness of your home at the end of the day. This could drive you crazy and all the help you are getting may be all for naught.

The mind going haywire is a terrible enemy. Only you can get you out of this should-I-or-shouldn't-I mode.

What is the use of working to help everyone if you lose your mind and turn into a vegetable? How destitute will your family be if you go home? Is everyone differently abled mentally or physically that quitting your job will be disastrous?

Will the mortgage company take possession of any of your organs if you stop paying? Why will your family lose face if you return the car? Is having them shamed worse than losing your mind or possibly even cause your death?

If you are suffering now and making yourself horribly sick, the heavens must be telling you something. It is not a cruel God we have, you know.

He is an all-knowing, magnificent, munificent God! He gives us hints now and then—all pointing to our means of escape—if something is not right or is not working to our advantage.

It is when you stubbornly hold on to something that is not worthwhile anymore that you begin to suffer immensely.

You should have enough confidence in your professional expertise to find a job back home. Go for broke! Trust your instinct! Put your faith in yourself and in a divine being that will guide you.

You will never go wrong. Ever! Did Jesus not admonish his apostles: "Ye men of little faith!"

(E-mail the author at emarcelo@inquirer.com.ph, Subject: Lifestyle, or send your letters to INQUIRER. Log on to www.pbs.gov.ph and listen to Ms Marcelo co-host the program "Kalikasan Vigilante," 7:15-8:30 p.m., Monday-Friday, on dwBR 104.3 FM.)

It is when you stubbornly hold on to something that is not worthwhile anymore that you begin to suffer

ALI-MJCI SAN LAZARO BPO COMPLEX BREAKS GROUND

Ayala Land Inc. (ALI) and its partner Manila Jockey Club Inc. (MJCI), broke ground last November 21, 2007 for the San Lazaro E-Services Building, which will be constructed within the San Lazaro BPO Complex located at the corner of Yuseco and Felix Huertas Streets, site of the former San Lazaro Racetrack in Sta. Cruz, Manila. The San Lazaro E-Services Building, the first of 2 towers, will be a 14-storey, 21,000 square meter Grade-A facility designed to address the office space requirements and to cater to the 24x7 work environment of BPO firms. The facility will provide large and efficient building floor plates, telco & data redundancies, large capacity, high-speed elevators, 100% back-up power, support retail amenities and parks & open spaces. Nestled in the heart of city, the San Lazaro E-Services Building will form part of the mixed-use development of ALI in the Manila area, which includes residential towers and condominiums by Avida and Celadon Townhouses by Community Innovations Inc. The project site is considered an ideal location for BPO firms due to its close proximity to the University Belt and its accessibility to the major business districts, airports and seaports in the Metropolis. The San Lazaro E-Services Building will be the largest BPO facility in the city of Manila providing approximately 6,000 job opportunities for the residents of the city. Completion of the first tower is targeted for November 2008. Shown in the groundbreaking ceremony (L-to-R): Mr. Jaime I. Ayala (President and CEO of Ayala Land Inc.), Mayor Alfredo Lim (City of Manila), Atty. Alfonso Reyno Jr. (Chairman of the Board & CEO, MJCI), Congresswoman Zenaida Angping (Third District of Manila), and Atty. Alfonso Reyno III (EVP & COO, MJCI).

Fort Bonifacio Development Corporation (FBDC) breaks ground for the BGC E-Services Building at Bonifacio Global City

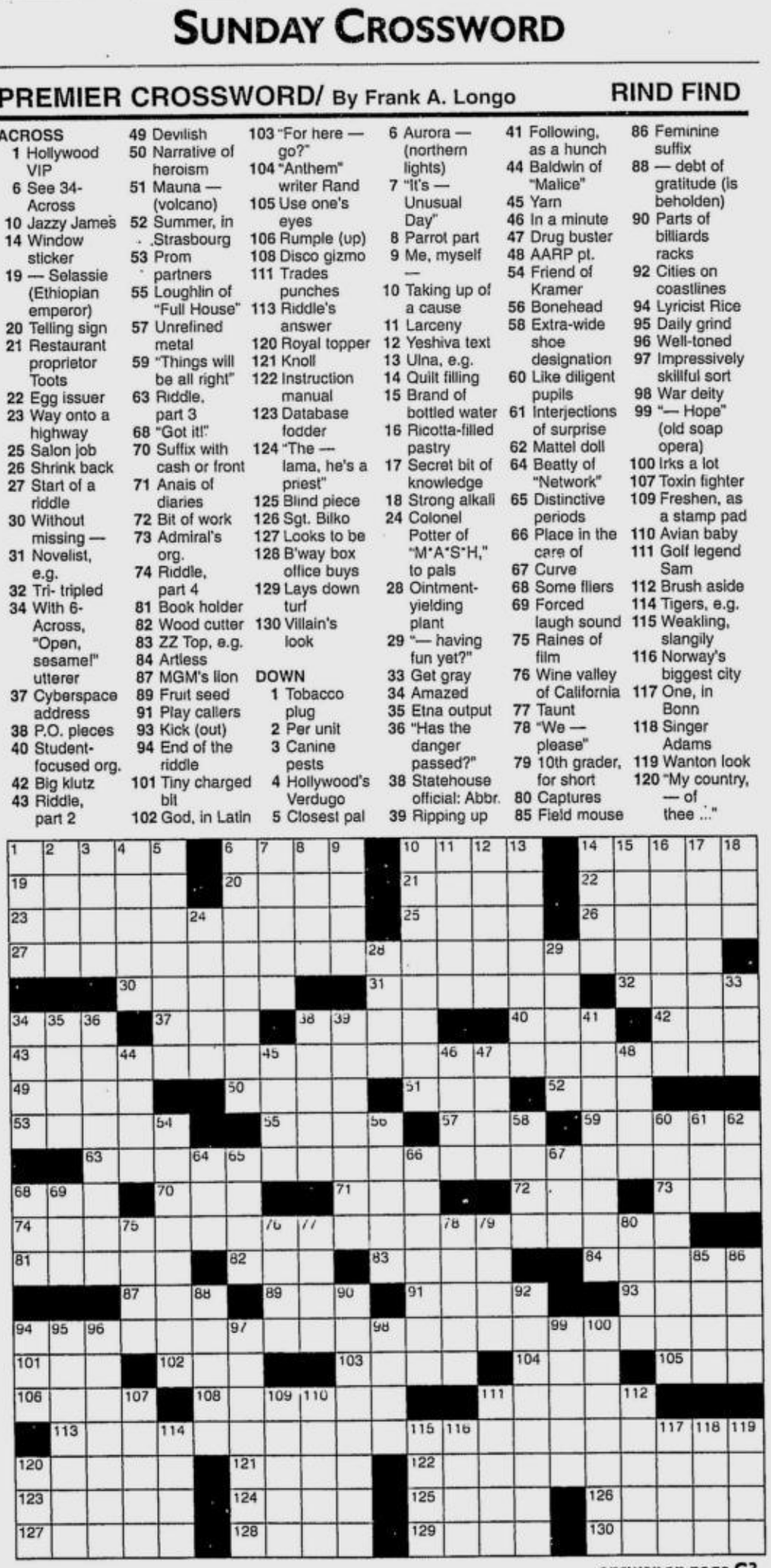
Located at the corner of 31st Street and Rizal Drive in the PEZA IT-registered E-Square Zone of Bonifacio Global City. To be completed by the 1st Quarter of 2010, the BGC E-Services Building will be a 29-storey, Grade-A facility which will cater to the office space requirements of BPO locators who are looking to locate at Bonifacio Global City, which has been envisioned to be the next premiere business district of the country. Specifically designed for BPO firms, the building boasts of a large and efficient floor plate, open layout, large, capacity high-speed elevators, telco & data redundancies and 100% back-up power. In addition to the retail establishments conveniently located at the nearby Bonifacio Stopover, the BGC E-Services Building will also have dining outlets and service establishments right at the ground floor ensuring a high level of convenience for the building locators. Project owner is FBDC with Ayala Land Inc. (ALI) acting as Development, Marketing and Leasing Manager.

SUNDAY CROSSWORD

PREMIER CROSSWORD/ By Frank A. Longo — **RIND FIND**

ACROSS
1 Hollywood VIP
6 See 34-Across
10 Jazzy James
14 Window sticker
19 — Selassie (Ethiopian emperor)
20 Telling sign
21 Restaurant proprietor Toots
22 Egg issuer
23 Way onto a highway
25 Salon job
26 Shrink back
27 Start of a riddle
30 Without missing —
31 Novelist, e.g.
32 Tri- tripled
34 With 6-Across, "Open, sesame!" utterer
37 Cyberspace address
38 P.O. pieces
40 Student-focused org.
42 Big klutz
43 Riddle, part 2
49 Devilish
50 Narrative of heroism
51 Mauna — (volcano)
52 Summer, in Strasbourg
53 Prom partners
55 Loughlin of "Full House"
57 Unrefined metal
59 "Things will be all right"
63 Riddle, part 3
68 "Got it!"
70 Suffix with cash or front
71 Anais of diaries
72 Bit of work
73 Admiral's org.
74 Riddle, part 4
81 Book holder
82 Wood cutter
83 ZZ Top, e.g.
84 Artless
87 MGM's lion
89 Fruit seed
91 Play callers
93 Kick (out)
94 End of the riddle
101 Tiny charged bit
102 God, in Latin
103 "For here — go?"
104 "Anthem" writer Rand
105 Use one's eyes
106 Rumple (up)
108 Disco gizmo
111 Trades punches
113 Riddle's answer
120 Royal topper
121 Knoll
122 Instruction manual
123 Database fodder
124 "The — lama, he's a priest"
125 Blind piece
126 Sgt. Bilko
127 Looks to be
128 B'way box office buys
129 Lays down turf
130 Villain's look

DOWN
1 Tobacco plug
2 Per unit
3 Canine pests
4 Hollywood's Verdugo
5 Closest pal
6 Aurora — (northern lights)
7 "It's — Unusual Day"
8 Parrot part
9 Me, myself —
10 Taking up of a cause
11 Larceny
12 Yeshiva text
13 Ulna, e.g.
14 Quilt filling
15 Brand of bottled water
16 Ricotta-filled pastry
17 Secret bit of knowledge
18 Strong alkali
24 Colonel Potter of "M*A*S*H," to pals
28 Ointment-yielding plant
29 "— having fun yet?"
33 Get gray
34 Amazed
35 Etna output
36 "Has the danger passed?"
38 Statehouse official: Abbr.
39 Ripping up
41 Following, as a hunch
44 Baldwin of "Malice"
45 Yarn
46 In a minute
47 Drug buster
48 AARP pt.
54 Friend of Kramer
56 Bonehead
58 Extra-wide shoe designation
60 Like diligent pupils
61 Interjections of surprise
62 Mattel doll
64 Beatty of "Network"
65 Distinctive periods
66 Place in the care of
67 Curve
68 Some fliers
69 Forced laugh sound
75 Raines of film
76 Wine valley of California
77 Taunt
78 "We — please"
79 10th grader, for short
80 Captures
85 Field mouse
86 Feminine suffix
88 — debt of gratitude (is beholden)
90 Parts of billiards racks
92 Cities on coastlines
94 Lyricist Rice
95 Daily grind
96 Well-toned
97 Impressively skillful sort
98 War deity
99 "— Hope" (old soap opera)
100 Irks a lot
107 Toxin fighter
109 Freshen, as a stamp pad
110 Avian baby
111 Golf legend Sam
112 Brush aside
114 Tigers, e.g.
115 Weakling, slangily
116 Norway's biggest city
117 One, in Bonn
118 Singer Adams
119 Wanton look
120 "My country, — of thee ..."



answer on page G3

Green partners

THE COUNTRY'S biggest non-government environmental partnership was recently initiated with the opening of a big nursery greenhouse at the Boy Scouts of the Philippines' headquarters and compound in Manila. The project will be supported technically by the Manila Seedling Bank Environment Center Foundation.

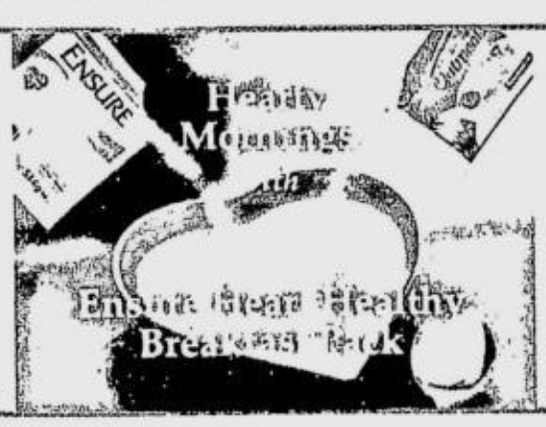
According to MSBF president, Chito Bertol, the project is envisioned to serve as a model of the future BSP nurseries in all regions of the country and aims to support and assist the overall government and private sectors' initiative in environmental renewal and rehabilitation.

BSP national commissioner Jose Eduardo Delgado stated that the greenhouse has been realized through the generous support of Coca-Cola Philippines as its contribution to the enhancement of the environment of the metropolis, the suburbs and all the provinces where BSP serves.

The greenhouse and nursery will teach boy scouts to love, save and preserve our trees, Delgado emphasized.

The nursery opening was led by BSP assistant secretary general Ernesto Baluyot, MSBF general manager Leonardo Ligeralde, and officers Dr. Isidro Esteban and Serafin Bayona.

ENSURE
HEART HEALTHY
BREAKFAST
PACK



Ensure, an adult nutritional drink highly recommended by doctors, has partnered with Quaker Oats to launch the new Ensure Heart Healthy Breakfast Pack. This breakfast option combines one sachet of Ensure and one sachet of Quaker Oats natural soluble fiber to address a major health concern in the country-heart disease. Ensure has low cholesterol and is rich with fiber and antioxidants. Quaker Oats, on the other hand, has 100% natural soluble fiber that may help reduce blood cholesterol levels and lower the risk of heart disease.

PURELY PERSONAL
Josephine Darang

Isabela patroness in Marian procession today

THE MIRACULOUS IMAGE OF OUR LADY of the Visitation of Guibang (Isabela) is joining the Marian procession at 4 p.m. today in Intramuros.

The patroness of Isabela is enthroned in her church in barrio Guibang, Gamu town.

Devotion to the Virgin began in 1905. The image was canonically crowned by Apostolic Nuncio Carmine Rocco in 1973.

Due to many miracles through her intercession, her church was elevated to a national shrine by the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) in 1986.

I went to Guibang in 1991 when the late Msgr. Johnny Marquez was the parish priest. Just sitting in front of her altar brought me a profound feeling of peace.

Aurora Lazo of the SM Lazo Medical Center and is from Ilagan, Isabela affirms the Virgin's miraculous intercession. The present parish priest is Fr. Daniel Guiyab.

First miracle

It is said that in 1905, a young man brought the image to a poor couple named Francisco Noe and Maria Noble. He asked them to pray the Rosary and do good deeds in honor of the Virgin Mary.

The couple lit a candle and prayed the whole night. At dawn the next day, they noticed an unusually sweet fragrance and discovered it was coming from the statue.

The unusual occurrence lasted for several days and people who went to the hut after hearing about the Virgin were miraculously healed.

70 carriages

The Marian procession organized by the Cofradia de la Inmaculada Concepcion, in cooperation with the Intramuros Administration, will feature 70 *carrozas*.

Tuguegarao Archbishop Diosdado Talamayan will give the invocation. Fr. Johann Sebastian and Fr. Jay Lina will bless the images.

The Sisters of the Disciples of St. Therese will lead the prayers behind the *carroza* of Our Lady of Justice and Truth. The Cofradia will accompany Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception.

Taal native Ramon Orlina will lead devotees of Our Lady of Caysasay, including members of the Church Historical Authentic Restoration Movement (CHARM).

This year's *hermanos mayores* are Estela Justiniani Lopez and Josefina Tiongson. Next year's hermanos will be Bootsie and Oscar Violago. Lipa Archbishop Ramon Arguelles will officiate in the concelebrated Mass at 2 p.m.

Pipe organ festival

The second Pipe Organ Festival of the Manila Cathedral will be held Dec. 2-8. Pipe organ music will feature in the celebration of the feast of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Dec. 8.

Events include a mini-concert of Marian songs, today, 1:30 p.m.; Hermana Mass of the Cofradia de la Inmaculada Concepcion, 2 p.m.; Triduum of Masses with mini-recitals, Dec. 5-7, 12:10 p.m.; fiesta Mass, Dec. 8, 12 noon, using the new composition "Misa Inmaculada Concepcion," and Mass for the 49th anniversary of the dedication of post-war Manila Cathedral on Dec. 10, 6 p.m. A gala concert follows at 7 p.m. Another name of the cathedral is Basilica Minore de Inmaculada Concepcion.

MLQU is 60

Congratulations to the Manuel L. Quezon University on its 60th foundation anniversary. It had its "Outstanding Alumni Awards Night" at the Wack-Wack Golf and Country Club. Other activities are lined up for Dec. 7-8 at the Monzon Hall of the Quiapo campus.

Holy Mass will be held each day and different exhibits will be opened. Call 7340121 to 24, local 108 (Manda) and local 112 (Loida).

Famous alumni

MLQU's illustrious alumni include Supreme Court justices Venecio Escolin, Isagani A. Cruz, Jose C. Vitug Jr., Jose A. R. Melo, Leonardo A. Quisumbing and Ruben T. Reyes; entrepreneurs Norberto B. Quisumbing Jr. and Ambrosio Cantada; senators Wenceslao R. Lagumbay and Wigberto E. Tañada; financial managers David Balangue, Augusto Barcelon, Francis Monera and Ruperto Somera; ambassadors Sedfrey Ordoñez and Vesta Cuyugan, and military and police generals Romeo Espino and Avelino Razon.

Shrine is 2

The Archdiocesan Shrine of Nuestra Señora de Guia in Ermita will mark its second anniversary on Dec. 3. The Blessed Sacrament will be on view after the 7 p.m. Mass today. A procession will start at 4:30 a.m. tomorrow then a Pro Populi Mass at 6 p.m.

The Virgen de Guia is the oldest image in the Philippines. A Spanish soldier discovered in 1571 that it was venerated by natives on the shores of Ermita where the church is now. Tony Adriano just arrived from Rome where he presented the pilgrim image to the Holy Father.

25 years as priest

Fr. Cecil Datar will celebrate his 25 years as a priest Dec. 7 with a concelebrated Mass at 4 p.m. at the Home of the Clergy Chapel in Sorsogon City. Fr. Datar is the executive director of the Help a Diocesan Servant Foundation that has helped fishermen in Gumaca, Quezon and other towns get their own fishing boats.

Wellness talk

Two parishes in Parañaque responded to the call of Dr. Teresa Bitanga Valeros for wellness. Those interested can call 8217672 or text 0917-6067988.

Dr. Teresa believes all diseases begin in the colon. Her apostolate includes attending to the health of nuns, old priests and the elderly. It stems from her devotion to Our Lady Rosa Mistica whose special Masses are held every 13th of the month, 12 noon, at the Harrison Plaza Chapel. See you on Dec. 13.

Telethon

ABC Channel 5 and the Confraternity of Mary Mediatrix of All Grace present "Speaking of Mary: A Marian Telethon of Prayer and Catechism," Dec. 8, 2-4:30 p.m., Channel 5.

It celebrates the solemnity of the Immaculate Conception by prayer and study.

ERRATUM. In the Nov. 25 column, Fe Rodriguez (left), was inadvertently identified as Helen Ong (right). Others in photo taken during a meeting of the Cofradia de la Inmaculada Concepcion, are Danny Dolor, Cardinal Rosales and Nene Leonor.

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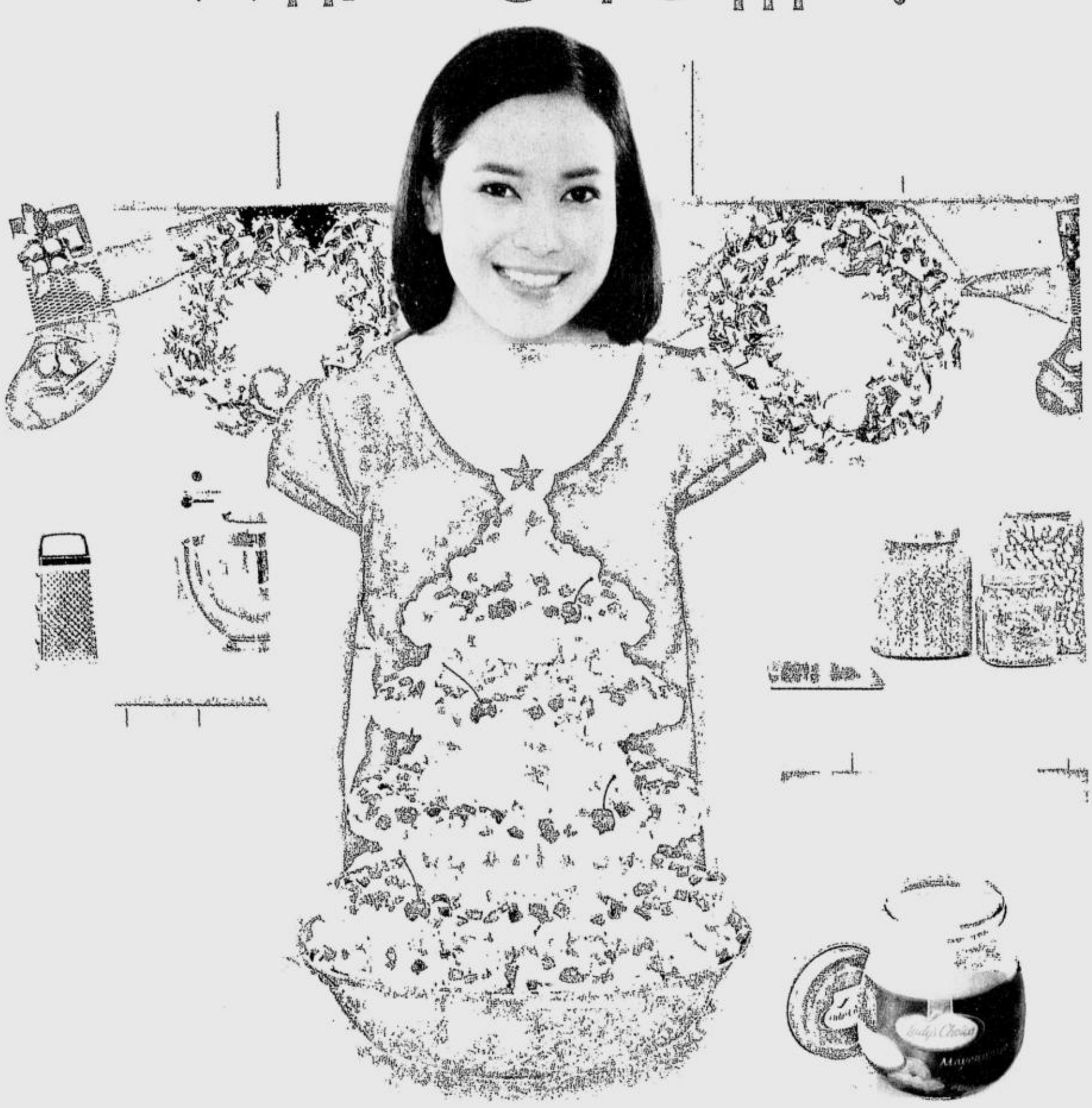

FRUITY MACARONI SALAD

Ingredients:

1 cup LC Mayo (1 small 220ml bottle)
1/2 cup condensed milk
1/2 block cream cheese (optional)
4 cups cooked macaroni noodles
1 cup fruit cocktail, drained
2 small red juicy apples, unpeeled and cut into cubes
1/2 block cheddar cheese, cut into cubes

Procedure:

Combine 1 cup LC Mayo with condensed milk and cream cheese. Blend and mix well by hand.

Add 4 cups cooked macaroni salad, fruit cocktail and the apples. Top with cubed cheddar cheese. Chill and serve cold.

CLASSIC CHICKEN MACARONI SALAD

Ingredients:

1/2 cup LC Mayonnaise
1/4 tsp fine salt
1/8 tsp ground black pepper
2 cups cooked salad macaroni noodles
1/2 cup pineapple tidbits
1/2 cup boiled chicken, cut into cubes
2 tbsp finely chopped carrots
2 tsp finely chopped celery
2 tsp pickle relish
1/2 cup cheese, diced

Procedure:

Combine LC mayo, salt and ground black pepper. Mix well. Add cooked salad macaroni noodles, pineapple tidbits, boiled chicken, chopped carrots,chopped celery and pickle relish. Top with diced cheese.

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Virgencita Lagunsay (Region XI)
Filipina E. Caballero (Region XII)
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Purposeful and correctly driven life

From page H1

complains about her grade, but spends all her leisure time in the mall; anyway, college is still two years away. Julia is purposeful, Maria is not.

After years of helping children and adolescents, Cox has written the excellent parenting manual, "No Mind Left Behind." In the book, he lists traits essential for success in school and life. Aside from a sense of purpose, he states that kids and teens need to have problem-solving skills, self-awareness, and social attunement.

Problem solving

Rosa misplaces her cellphone. Unlike Julia, who cried, panicked, and nagged her mother to buy her a new phone, Rosa retraces her steps, returns to the classroom and asks her friends' help. When she drops by the Lost and Found section, the attendant returns her phone (with her name labeled at the back) to her.

Julia asks Rosa, "What would you do if you could not find your phone?" Rosa answers, "I have savings, which I can use to buy a new one. If the money is not enough, I can also tutor my cousins for a small fee."

Some problems are simple, such as finding lost things. Other problems are more complex, such as handling peer pressure. Good problem solvers are flexible thinkers—they can view the problem from different angles and brainstorm various ways to tackle it.

Alice is quarreling with her friend. She gets so angry that she knows she needs to cool off before things get worse. She excuses herself and runs around the park for half an hour, knowing that exercise calms her down. Sure enough, after taking a shower, Alice apologizes to her friend and suggests going to dinner together.

Pablo has not spoken to his friend in months. When asked about the cause of the rift, he says he has forgotten, but "we are guys, so we don't really have to deal with it." Alice is a good problem solver, Pablo a rotten one.

Self-awareness

Rob is invited by his friends to watch a rock concert. "Thank you," he says. "But I don't like loud noises and huge crowds. But I'll take a rain check. When the next good movie comes out, let's watch it together."

Unfortunately, Rudy does not have Rob's sense of self. Rudy does not particularly like noises and crowds either, but he wants to fit in with his peers. He spends a miserable evening in the concert, and wakes up with a huge headache.

People who are self-aware can define their likes and dislikes clearly, and act accordingly. Susan wants to try street dance because she is good at gymnastics. On the other hand, Rita, who is tone-deaf, cries for a month when she does not make it to the Glee Club.

Self-aware people understand how actions affect each other. Miss Ong, a language teacher, knows that her preschool class loves stories, but not if they are read too fast. She makes sure to monitor her speed in the next session. Contrast her with Miss Reyes, a math teacher, who snaps at anyone who dares ask a question. Yet she does not understand why she gets bad evaluations. "After all, I work hard," she thinks. "Kids today are so ungrateful."

Social attunement

Rick is the biggest and oldest kid in the birthday party, but he generously ensures that the other children have the chance to win prizes. On the other hand, Raffy, his twin, competes hard to win everything, pumping his fist into the air whenever he gets another prize.

Rick is socially attuned. He can empathize with other people. Raffy is egocentric, preoccupied with his own wants and needs. Egocentrism is normal in young children, and indeed, it is their way to cope with the world. (That's why adults who think the world revolves around them are called "childish.")

However, prolonged egocentrism becomes selfish and unhealthy, leading to teens and adults who become oblivious to the effects of their actions on others.

Elisa thinks carefully about what to give her sister Emy for Christmas, but Emy is not so socially attuned. Emy sees a large bunch of pens on sale and decides to give everyone a pen, even if Elisa still has a lot of unused pens. All of us know that mass-produced corporate gifts are never as meaningful as loving ones.

In "No Mind Left Behind," Cox discusses how parents and teachers can help children acquire the important traits above. He lists ways to encourage kids to initiate action, sustain attention, organize tasks, improve memory, and manage emotions.

Cox says, "These skills have helped children diagnosed with special needs reach new levels of achievement, and they help every child fulfill his or her fullest potential, regardless of age and development level."

"No Mind Left Behind," (2007, Perigree) by Adam J. Cox, is available in Powerbooks.

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French kissing in the Philippines

French tourism arrivals to the country are increasing, lured by dive sites and deep-sea pearls

Text and photos by Vangie Baga-Reyes

IN FRANCE, YOU GET 500 different kinds of cheeses," said Philippine Tourism Sec. Joseph "Ace" Durano. "In the Philippines, we are proud of our 500 species of corals and 12,000 species of seashells. That's our biodiversity."

Durano's remarks were made before a select group of French and Filipino travel and tour operators one chilly autumn afternoon at the Maison Blanche on 5th Avenue Montaigne in Paris. Durano also cited the Philippines' rich marine life and the increasing interest in scuba-diving among Europeans.

"Scuba-divers from different parts of the world have experienced this biodiversity for many years now. And we are just so delighted to inform you that the Philippines has been chosen as the 'Destination of the Year' next year at the Salon de la Plongée Sous-Marine, the premier dive fair/show in Paris," said Durano.

"Our presence in the show signals the start of more strategic promotions campaigns for 'Dive Philippines' in France. We, therefore, look forward to welcoming more clients to our country."

For the past two years, scuba-diving has been DOT's main draw for French tourists. Apparently, their efforts have paid off. French arrivals to the Philippines from January to September are now plus 22.6 percent, one of the fastest and highest percentage growths from its worldwide source markets to the Philippines.

"The market has responded very well," said Durano. "It's a confirmation that we've done the right thing for the past two years as far as positioning the country in scuba-diving is concerned."

Selling mission

But DOT's effort doesn't just stop there. Constant promotional campaigns are needed to get better results. The RP-French selling mission and travel exchange workshop is aimed at establishing linkages, exchanging travel insights and information, and coming up with joint activities to push the Philippines as a tourism destination for the French.

"This is the best time to rediscover the Philippines," said Durano, who arrived in the workshop with Undersecretary Eduardo Jarque Jr. and DOT chief of staff Josefina Patricia Asirit.

They were assisted by Verna Buensuceso, head of Team Europe; Marie Venus Tan, attaché, DOT Frankfurt; Arnold Gonzales, promotions manager, DOT Frankfurt; and Marites Ballester, media-relations officer, Team Europe.

"Numerous infrastructure development and tourism investments have been completed in recent months, following unprecedented increase in tourist arrivals to the country," Durano said. "Even as I speak, several more resorts and hotels are being developed to satisfy the demand. The development and increase of transport infrastructure and frequency of both domestic access, and international carrier services, have now become invaluable links to our numerous island destinations."

About 17 companies from the Philippine private sector attended the selling mission, such as Dos Palmas Resort and Spa; Baron Travel Corporation; Asiaventure Travel and Tours; Philippine Airlines; Mandala Spa and Villas; Ananyana Resort and Spa; and El Nido Resorts.

Green for go

Maison Blanche, a fine-dining restaurant, was transformed into a conference hall packed with people doing travel business.

Filipino representatives from the private sector were given a designated table where they could present their company profiles and brochures. Some even brought tarpaulins and laptops to showcase their products.

The selling mission also marked the 60th year of diplomatic relations between France and the Philippines.

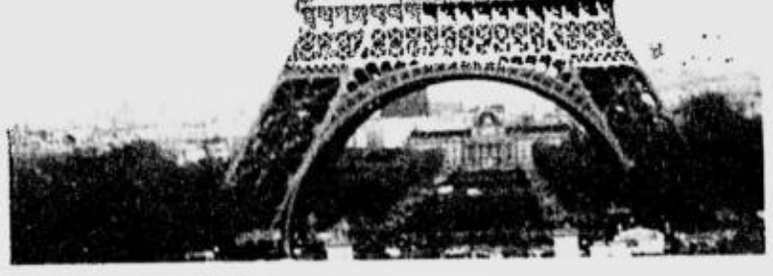
For a time, French travelers were quite apprehensive in touring the Philippines.

Gonzales explained: "Based on the French travel advisory to the Philippines, the country map was all red and orange—red is 'Do not go'; orange is 'Go with caution.' Unfortunately, since the Abu Sayyaf height it was code red. It was only when we relaunched our publicity last year that the travel advisory was changed and became green for 'go.'"

Right now, orange is indicated in half of Mindanao; red only in Jolo area.

Nouvelles Frontieres, one of the top travel operators in France, is among the enthusiastic companies doing business again in the Philippines.

FRENCH/14



TOURISM bigwigs in Paris. Marie Venus Tan, DOT director for Western, Central and Eastern Europe; Sec. Joseph "Ace" Durano; Undersecretary Eduardo Jarque Jr.; Verna Buensuceso, head of Team Europe; lawyer Josefina Asirit, DOT chief of staff; and Arnold Gonzales, promotions manager, DOT Frankfurt

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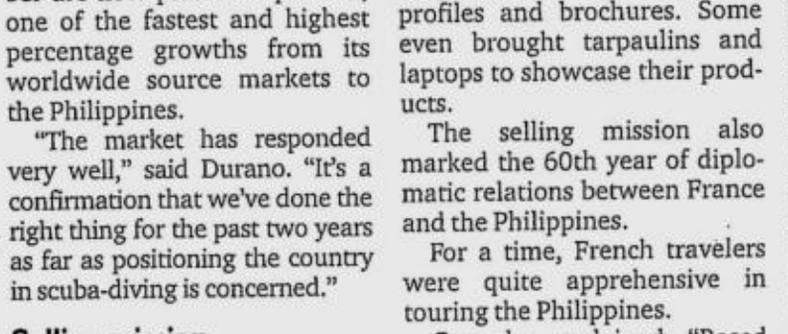

PHOEBE Lim of Eskaya Beach Resort in Bohol exchanges travel insights with Eric Bouladou and Myriam Viennet of Nouevelles Frontieres, one of the biggest travel operators in France.

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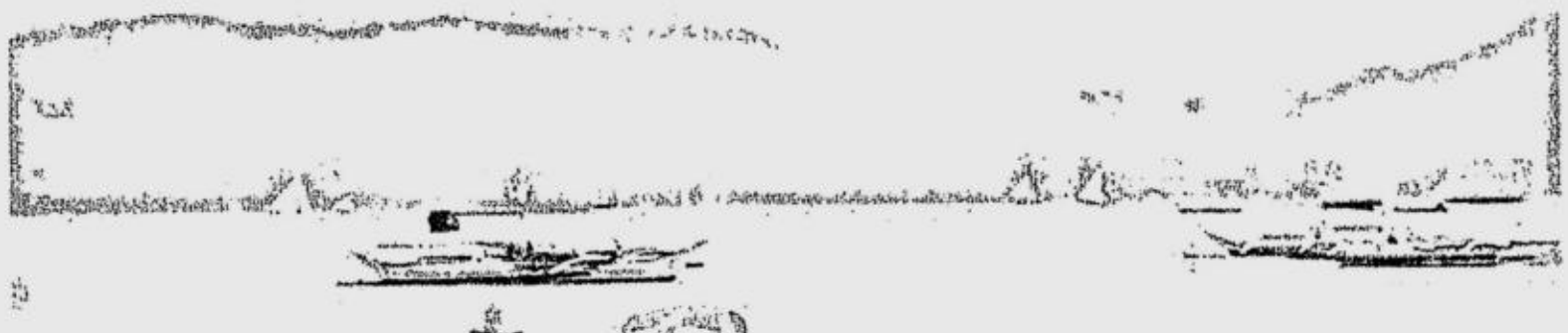

AN AIR-CONDITIONED boat ferries guests to and from Discovery Shores.

Boracay is also for landlubbers

There is enough to do on land and within Discovery Shores that people can stay away from the sea if they want to during their stay

Text and photos by Linda B. Bolido

WITH ITS POWDERY white beach, usually calm waters and mild weather, Boracay is irresistible to sun worshippers and water babies.

But there is no need for a landlubber to give the island paradise a wide berth just because he or she does not swim or sail or enjoy simply lying on the beach to soak in the sun and have the warm saltwater lapping at his/her feet.

With the right island base, even the most committed to the idea that people were given feet because they are meant to stay on land will most likely find that there is a little spot in Boracay where they can happily go about their business of relaxing and resting and shutting out the rest of the world without dipping their pretty little toes in the sea.

EXECUTIVE chef David Pardo de Tavera

Close yet far enough

Discovery Shores may just be the right place where they can be so close without having to go into the sea if they do not want to. In fact, although the trip includes boat transfer, guests can stay dry all throughout as the air-conditioned boat that ferries them from the Caticlan airport in Malay, Aklan, has a secure and convenient gangplank that will keep them bone dry as they embark or disembark.

And there is plenty enough things to do within the confines of the multilevel resort hotel that if they want to keep the sea at a safe distance all through their stay they can very well do so.

People who like to swim but do not care for salt water can spend all their waking hours lounging at the pool bar. With stools set up some inches below the water, they do not even have to get out of the pool.

And parents do not have to worry about keeping the kids unattended while they enjoy themselves. Only a low concrete bar separates the adult pool from the children's swimming area. It is easy enough to just swim or walk to get to the other side if youngsters get into trouble.

A Jacuzzi is another amenity attached to the pool.

GUESTS who decide on impulse to go swimming need not look far for a towel.

WITH rooms like this, a visitor can simply catch up on sleep.

FROM a suite at the top level, guests get a view of the whole resort and the sea beyond.

SEAFOOD paella is one of the treats awaiting guests.

THE KITCHEN offers various crab preparations.

People watching

For those who simply want to enjoy the sight of the sea and other people engaging in water sports like sailing, swimming, parasailing and jet skiing, Discovery Shores has set up lounge chairs meters away from the edge of the water.

Sheltered from the sun by tall coconut trees and a bamboo fence covered by mesh netting to lessen the impact of high winds, they can read a book, take a nap, while occasionally taking a peek at activities in the water. Solicitous hotel staff members are never far away, always within hailing distance of guests, even anticipating their needs—for a tall cold drink, an extra towel, a parasol or whatever.

The lounge area is also an ideal spot for enjoying Boracay sunsets that are as postcard-pretty as the famed ones at Manila Bay.

Just recently, Discovery Shores opened its spa that will be operated by Mandala Spa & Villas. With this collaboration, guests do not have to travel to the other side of the island to enjoy one of the relaxing and rejuvenating treatments on Mandala's menu of services.

Shuttle is available to bring guests to the shopping area, the *talipapa*, located at Station 2, halfway between the resort and Mandala's main branch. They can have a whole day just browsing and sampling some of the eating places in "town". Those who like Italian may want to try Aria.

But staying in for meals, despite being in a hotel, is not such a bad prospect. Chef David Pardo de Tavera, who supervises all the kitchens of the Discovery chain, has drawn up a bountiful and diverse menu for the Boracay resort that showcases the island's strength—fresh seafood—while providing for those who may want to have their red meat and poultry even on a tropical paradise.

Pardo de Tavera, who describes the menu as island cuisine, relies on four building blocks—seafood, buko, tropical fruits and US beef.

Discovery Shores takes care of its guests in other ways, too, even partnering with VMV Hypoallergenics to come up with toiletries and skin care products that will best protect them from sun and sea during their stay.

No wonder the resort is as popular with foreigners as with locals, according to Jose C. Parreño, Jr., Discovery Shores manager.

For an even more memorable voyage of Discovery, prospective guests can start by checking in at Discovery Suites in Ortigas Center, where the staff under general manager Bobby R. Horrigan will make sure they are sufficiently mellow to enjoy days and nights of sybaritic living in its sister resort.

Discovery Shores is at Station 1, Balabag, Boracay, Malay, Aklan; (6336) 288-4500, (632) 720-8888; fax (6336) 288-4505/(632) 720-5555; e-mail rsvndsb@discovery.com.ph; website www.discoveryshoresboracay.com.

Asian Spirit (632-851-8888) has hourly flights daily to and from Caticlan. The first flight leaves Manila at 6 a.m. and the last flight at 3:30 p.m. From Caticlan, the first flight departs at 7:30 a.m. and the last flight at 5 p.m.

THE PAMPERING of guests starts with a foot spa upon arrival.

TRAVEL BRIEFS

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CHRISTMAS IS A SEASON FOR SHOPPING and giving. And if you shop with your Metrobank Credit Card, you might just find yourself cruising around the world and also get a free limited-edition stylish bag. Promo runs until Dec. 31. Joining is easy. Every P500 accumulated purchases using Metrobank Credit Card within the promo period entitles you to a raffle entry. For a minimum P10,000 retail purchase within one calendar month, a Metrobank credit cardholder gets a bag. With Metrobank Card Corporation's newest promo, you can go on an Asian cruise; discover the magic of the Mediterranean; experience the rugged beauty, magnificent wildlife and phenomenal fishing of Alaska's pristine wilderness; live it up in the Bahamas and Florida; or get to know the Polynesian heritage while enjoying Hawaii's beaches.

Local residents' rates

The Bellevue Manila offers attractive packages for local residents starting at P4500++ a night. The package includes complimentary breakfast at the hotel's main dining outlet, Café d'Asie, shuttle service to nearby malls and business districts, as well as free use of the swimming pool and gym facilities. Call 7718181.

Haven for nature lovers

Camp John Hay in Baguio City offers holistic wellness with its lush greenery, including a total of 250,000 trees that serve as a giant filter that cleans the air. The trees are planted in strategic points making guests feel like they have been transported away from the noise and congestion of the city. Trees mark Camp John Hay seasons. They turn dark green during the cold wet season and a mix of different shades of green during the hot dry season. They also provide a healthy habitat for birds, bees and butterflies. Call 6376966 and 074-4425782. E-mail cjhmarketing@campjohnhay.com.ph or cjhsales@campjohnhay.com.ph. Visit www.campjohnhay.com.ph.

PAL's kit for economy class

Philippine Airlines launches its Fiesta (Economy) Class Overnight Kit. Distributed to all Fiesta Class passengers flying on PAL's long-haul flights, the kit helps passengers relax. Each kit comes in a drawstring bag which contains travel essentials—a dental set (toothbrush and Colgate toothpaste), an eye-mask for a restful slumber and a pair of socks to help chase the cabin chills away.

2+1 promo

Hyatt Hotel and Casino Manila offers a variety of recreational and leisure activities, relaxing and rejuvenating spa and a fitness center featuring a 35-meter lap pool, a children's pool and an outdoor whirlpool. For the holiday season, Hyatt offers a special promo on its elegantly designed guest rooms or suites. Make your bookings for two nights from Dec. 12-Jan. 6, 2008 and get a one-night free accommodation. Call 2451234.

Special rate

The EGI Taft Tower Hotel on Taft Avenue, Manila, features Certified Friends discount promo. If you avail of three days and two nights hotel accommodations at any of EGI Taft Tower well-appointed rooms, guests can get a Certified Friends coupon that entitles them to a 10-percent discount on their next booking. The promo runs from Dec. 3-31. Call 5670651 to 58 or visit www.tafttowerhotel.com.

Star-studded gala dinners

Qatar Airways launched its regular service to the United States with two glittering gala dinners. Dinner in New York was held in The Allen Room at the city's Jazz at Lincoln Center, just off Broadway. Guests included Donald Trump, Hollywood stars Andie MacDowell and Julianne Moore, and US Ambassador to the State of Qatar Chase Untermeyer. The second dinner was held at the Mandarin Oriental in Washington DC. Guests included US Secretary of Defense William Cohen, former US Ambassador to the United Nations John Bolton and former US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage.

Rejuvenating experience

Plantation Bay has just opened the exclusive Mogambo Springs Spa. Patterned after a Tokugawa Japanese village, the spa occupies some 5,000 sqm of space for comfortable and luxurious massages. It has several shower rooms and three rooms where guests can check in within the spa premises. Conceptualized and designed by Plantation Bay president Manny Gonzalez with architect Ma. Lourdes Martinez-Onozawa.

JUNIOR jetsetter passengers ages 2-11 years will get an exciting ride as DC Comics' Justice League Super Heroes join them onboard PAL.

Superheroes join PAL jetsetters

PHILIPPINE AIRLINES' YOUNG Junior Jetsetter passengers aged 2-11 years will get an exciting ride as DC Comics' Justice League Super Heroes join them onboard.

Wonder Woman, Batman, Superman, Hawkgirl, Green Lantern, The Flash and Martian Manhunter join PAL's youngest passengers traveling between Manila and San Francisco, Los Angeles, Vancouver, Las Vegas, Honolulu, Melbourne and Sydney in activity kits specially created for Philippine Airlines.

Two different activity sets, packed in easy-to-carry tote bags, are available for flights originating from Manila and for flights bound for Manila.

Both kits contain an activity book which will entertain and educate children on popular travel destinations. In addition, the silver Justice League kit which is distributed on flights out of Manila carries an IQ puzzle, collectible lenticular cards, stackable crayons and a rubber wrist band.

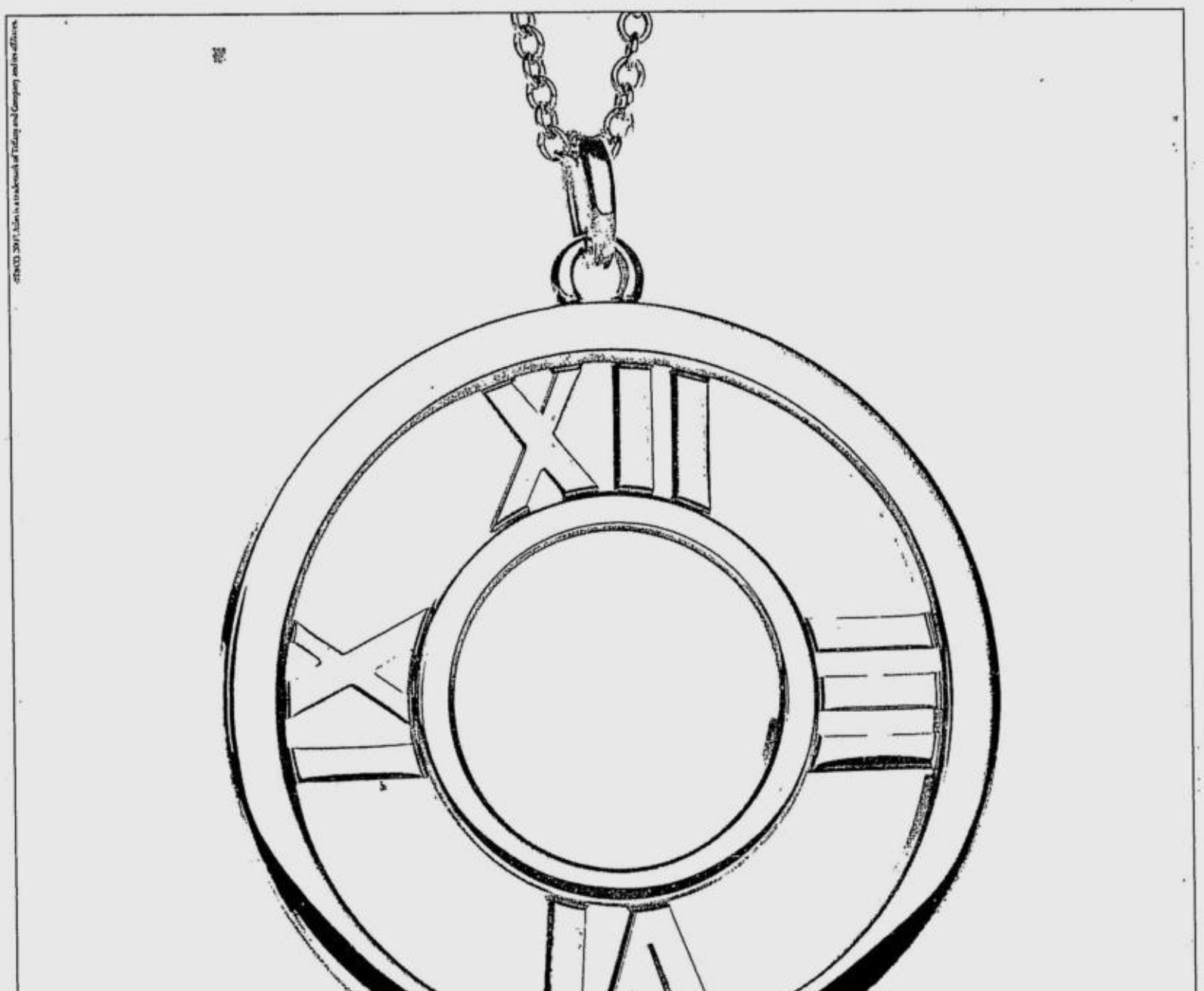
The blue Justice League kit distributed on flights back to Manila contains static cling stickers, an embosser, a notepad and a box of crayons.

"This year marks the fourth year that Philippine Airlines has partnered with Warner Bros. Consumer Products to offer in-flight kits featuring popular and well-loved characters to our young passengers. This speaks of our commitment to provide our passengers, no matter what their age, with the best in-flight service and product that Philippine Airlines has to offer," said PAL's VP for marketing Felix Cruz.

"Families represent a large segment of our passengers and it is important for us to ensure that we cater to their needs. By providing suitable entertainment for our young passengers, we make their earliest experience with PAL as fun and comfortable as possible and also give their parents or guardians a chance to relax onboard."

"We are pleased to continue our partnership with Philippine Airlines to bring great entertainment to young travelers," said Bianca Lee, managing director for Warner Bros. Consumer Products, Greater China, Southeast Asia and India.

"Through the powerful force of the Justice League heroes, we hope these in-flight kits will provide hours of activity and fun to the passengers."



JACQUES Branellec (extreme right) presents the men behind the successful Jewelmer pearl production in Paris: creative director Robby Carmona, fashion designer Rhett Eala, Powerdance's Douglas Nierras and Bayanihan artistic director Lito Cruz Valle.

MODELS strike a pose in their stylish, mixed-colored South Sea pearls.

French kissing ...

From page 11

"Now that it's green for most parts of the Philippines, it's now the new destination in Asia," said Eric Bouladou of Nouvelles Frontieres.

"The Philippines has great potentials as a tourist destination because it's very authentic, modern and dynamic," Bouladou added. "The diving, and the beaches on Boracay, Cebu, Mindanao and Palawan, it's like a dream for the French people. Spa treatments are also very interesting. French people are always busy, living a very stressful life. They want to unwind. We know Philippines has many boutique hotels that offer spa treatments with good services."

Observing around the room, Durano noticed there was also a number of new French tour operators interested in the Philippines.

"I've met several people who have already been pushing Philippine packages for quite some time," he said. "But I feel much better to see that there are new interested players to carry the Philippines. I hope this selling mission will give them opportunity to discover new islands that they haven't heard of.

"That's how we are positioning the Philippines right now. If you want a new adventure and explore new places, go to the Philippines. The market is just so big. We've gone from the mindset that we have to beat Thailand or Malaysia. What's important is we position ourselves correctly on the market so you get a piece of the action, like a diving destination."

Before the workshop ended, Durano launched the first Philippine website in French: Philippines_tourism.fr. The website will be the promotions platform and core of Philippine travel and tourism network.

It's interactive and has links to various institutional travel information as well as creative do-it-yourself travel itineraries. It will provide direct access to partners. It has also been designed for the travel trade to include package promotions.

Dazzling Philippine pearl

A day before the selling mission—and as another way to promote the country—DOT partnered with Jewelmer and staged a gala night highlighting the Golden Philippine South Sea Pearl at Le Grand Amphitheatre of the Museum National d'Histoire Naturelle in Paris.

"The world's most precious and sought-after living gem [the Philippine South Sea pearl] is produced and nurtured in the most pristine and cleanest water environment," said Durano.

Jewelmer presented the luxurious golden South Sea pearls in a show called "Le Miracle de la Perle d'Or des Philippines" (The Miracle of the Philippine Golden Pearl). The audience was treated to a 45-minute journey to the colorful vistas of Philippine arts and culture through vibrant interludes of songs, dances and fashion centered around the golden pearls.

Manila's top models sashayed in Rhett Eala's elegant gowns in white, brown, orange and aqua-blue hues. But it was the mystical allure of the golden pearl jewelry opulently dangling from their necks, heads, ears and arms that captured viewers' attention, letting out oohs and aahs and a hearty applause after each parade.

Showcased were multi-stranded and multi-layered necklaces combined with pretty floral mother-of-pearl pendants; varying lengths of pearl chokers; and earrings with little polished hand-carved mother-of-pearl and golden pearl.

The fashion show, directed by Robert Carmona, was interspersed with dance numbers from Douglas Nierras' Powerdance and song and music of Verni Varga and violinist Jay Cayuca. The Bayanihan Philippine Dance Company also performed.

Present at the show were Manuel Cojuangco, Jewelmer president; Jacques Branellec, Jewelmer managing director and president of Philippine Association of Pearl Producers and Exporters; French senators and members of the National Assembly; Paris-based jewelry industry players; the Philippine diplomatic corps headed by Philippine Ambassador to France Jose Abeto Zaide; pearl lovers and aficionados from all over Europe.

The golden Philippine South Sea pearls are now being exhibited at the Museum of Natural History until March 2008.

"The Philippine South Sea Pearl has provided us with inspiration to our marketing initiatives, and will be one of our destination image-brand position statements in future campaigns," said Durano.

FILIPINO tour guide Emily Joy Boutet and Rissa Sebastian of Dos Palmas Resort in Palawan discuss tour activities in the Philippines with French visitors.

INTERNATIONALLY acclaimed Bayanihan performs traditional Filipino dances at DOT's travel exchange workshop at Maison Blanche, Paris.

TRANSPARENT pearl dresses composed of hundreds of white South Sea pearls and accented by multi-layered necklaces make for a stunning sight.

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WITH 30 EUROPEAN CITIES, 7500 addresses and nine soft-back books, the Louis Vuitton City Guide boxed set provides the traveller with an original view and a completely up-to-date Grand Tour of Europe.

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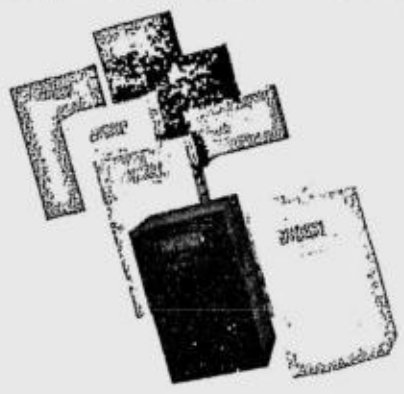
Since its creation in 1998, Louis Vuitton has edited nine City Guide boxed sets of European cities.



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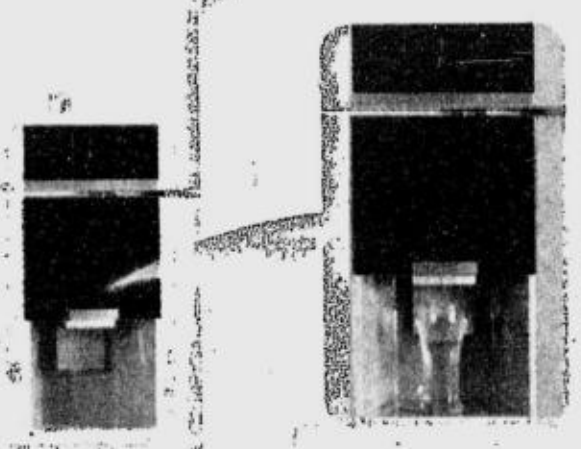

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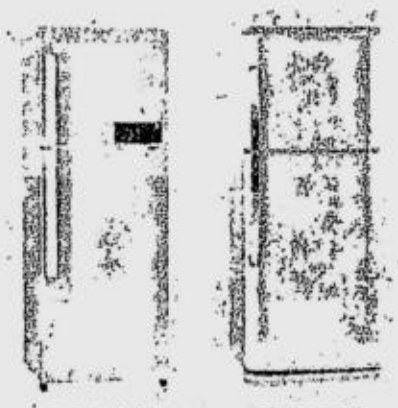

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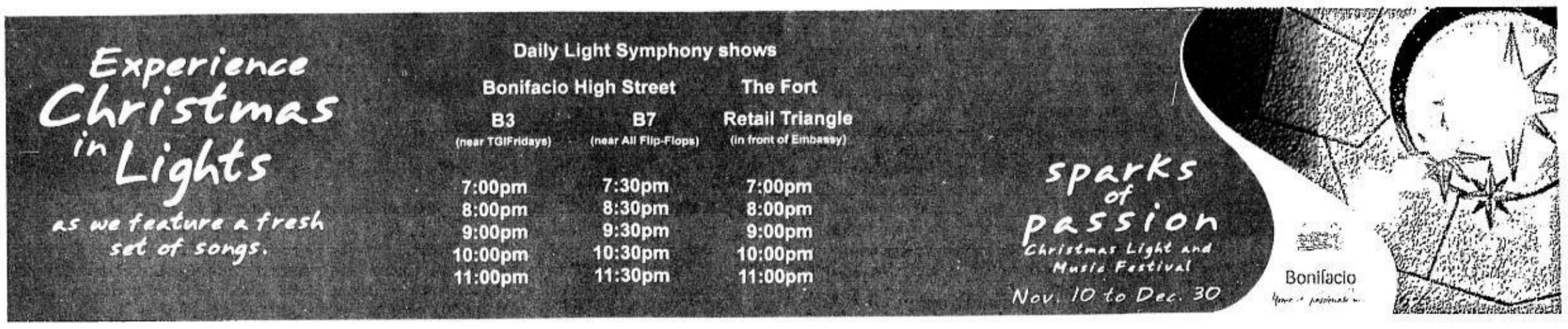
'Foster Child' wins in Paris

BRILLIANTE MENDOZA'S "Foster Child" has won the Prize for Fiction, besting entries from five countries at the International Environmental Film Festival in Paris, France. The film is a meditation on the life of a surrogate mother for abandoned and orphaned children. *Story on page J2.*



On Pinay sex workers in S'pore

Writer-producer Pete Daza says shooting this movie was a huge logistical nightmare

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

PETE DAZA, SCRIPTWRITER-producer of "Mona: Singapore Escort," recalls that shooting in the city-state was a "big headache."

It was a logistical nightmare to start with, he says, but things became even more challenging because lead star Iza Calzado was juggling two GMA 7 soap operas—"Atlantika" and "Impostora"—during the six-month shoot.

According to Daza, the producers originally eyed Angel Locsin for the lead role. "But GMA 7 cautioned us that Angel's schedule was more unmanageable," he said. "Moreover, she was too young."

In the end, Iza proved to be the propitious choice. Daza says they signed her before she did the Hollywood movie, "The Echo."

Calzado had no qualms about playing a role that's the exact opposite of her sweet-girl TV persona.

"Mona," tells the story of an OFW forced into the flesh trade. A real-life escort girl was on board as consultant.

"The script is based on our consultant's life," Daza says. "In doing our research, we interviewed over a dozen escort girls. Our consultant now manages her own escort agency."

Calzado shot for a day in the Singaporean red-light district Geylang Serai, Daza recounts.

"Iza got lots of good input from the escort girls. She spent some time with our consultant. She lived in Geylang Serai for a day," he recalls.

Although it took them half a year to finish the film, actual shooting days ran for only 16 days: four days in Singapore and 12 in Manila.

Daza explains that escort service, a euphemism for prostitution, is "legal in the city-state."

He notes: "A sex worker can apply for

ON PINAY/ J2

IZA CALZADO and Brad Murdoch in "Mona: Singapore Escort"

BAMBI AWARDS
Italian actress Sophia Loren and US actor Tom Cruise hold their awards from the German company Hubert Burda Media during the 59th Bambi ceremony in Duesseldorf on Thursday. Each year, the company honors celebrities from the fields of entertainment, literature, sports and politics. REUTERS

'Foster Child' bags prize in France

CHERRY Pie Picache and Kier Segundo star in this dramatic movie on foster care in the Philippines.

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

FILIPINO FILMMAKER BRILlante Mendoza's "Foster Child" wins the Prize for Fiction at the International Environmental Film Festival, besting entries from Australia, Spain, Russia, Iran and Turkey.

The festival ran in Paris, France, from Nov. 21 to 27.

Mendoza, who had attended another event in that country, the Entrevues Film Festival, was already at the airport bound for Manila when he learned of his film's triumph.

"French distributor Ad Vitam's Emmelie Gree informed me [of the win] when he called me on my cell phone. I was about to board the plane," Mendoza told the INQUIRER via SMS.

Mendoza was scheduled to arrive in Manila last Friday.

"Foster Child" stars Cherry Pie Picache as a surrogate mother who takes care of abandoned or orphaned children for P1,500 a month as part of a government program.

Third int'l trophy

"It's a great bonus," Mendoza said of his film's latest triumph

It is the third international trophy for "Foster," according to Picache's manager Ed Instrella. It previously won the Best Actress award for Picache at the Osians Cinefan Film Festival in New Delhi and the Special Jury Prize at the Eurasia Film Festival in Kazakhstan.

"More than the international recognition, what is important is that I'm happy with my work," Mendoza said.

The film's producer, Robbie Tan of Seiko, echoed Mendoza's sentiments.

"These international recognitions inspire me to keep producing more significant films even if they are not financially rewarding," Tan said via SMS. "I feel so good that Filipino films are alive abroad, whereas Philippine cinema is like a dead man walking in the country."

Tan confirmed that the film had won 5,000 euros (about P350,000) as part of the prize. "But it will go to its French distributor, Ad Vitam," Mendoza clarified.

"Foster Child" bested "Lucky Miles" from Australia, "Querida Bamako" from Spain, "Le Bannissement Izgnanie" from Russia, "Days of Rain" from Iran, and "Times and Winds" from Turkey.

The International Environmental Film Festival, which started in 1982, awarded the Grand Prize to Germany's "Iron-eaters," the Special Jury Prize to Denmark's "A Killer Bargain" and the Prize for Documentaries to Mexico's "En El Hoyo."

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HITMAN R13 12:00,2:10,4:15,6:20, 8:25,10:30	BEOWULF PG13 12:40,3:00,5:20, 7:40,10:00	THE KINGDOM R13 12:30,3:00,5:30, 8:00,10:30

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Jodie Foster to get Sherry Lansing award

LOS ANGELES—JODIE FOSter needs to make more room on her trophy shelf.

The 45-year-old star will add the Sherry Lansing Leadership Award to her collection of Oscars, Golden Globes and other awards.

Lansing, former chief of Paramount Pictures, will present Foster with the award Tuesday at The Hollywood Reporter's 16th annual Women in Entertainment breakfast.

The actress-director-producer "has consistently maintained a sensibility and quality that is not easily sustained in this industry," publisher John Kilcullen said Thursday. "She clearly embodies the qualities of excellence and achievement that this award was created to honor."

Previous recipients

Previous recipients include Barbara Walters and Meryl Streep.

Foster's film credits include "Taxi Driver," "The Accused," "The Silence of the Lambs" and this year's "The Brave One." *AP*

On Pinay sex workers...

From page J1

a 'yellow card.' The thing is, most Filipinos would rather not be legal. They'd rather fly from Manila to Singapore as tourists every couple of weeks."

He echoes Calzado's observation, though: "We don't want people to think that all Filipinas who go to Singapore are escort girls—which was how the term Japayuki was coined for all Filipinas who work in Japan."

He points out that the film earned support from women's groups, and that it's in line with the United Nations Millennium Development Goals to promote gender equality and women empowerment.

Daza asserts that "Mona" doesn't seek to glorify prostitution. "Our film is pro-choice, pro-woman."

High hopes

Filipino-British director Jowee Morel's previous film, "Mga Paru-Parong Rosas (Pink Butterflies)," tackled the plight of married homosexuals and was recently screened at the London Lesbian and Gay Film Festival.

Daza has high hopes for "Mona," which was shot with a digital camera and then blown up to 35mm film.

"We tried to put different points of view in the film," Daza says.

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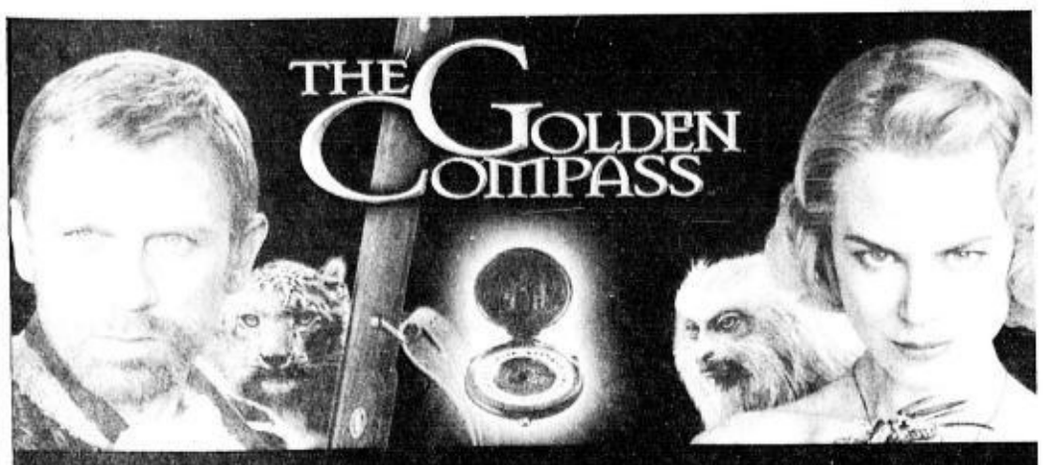


IS THE FILM ANTI-RELIGION?

"Not anti-religion but anti-oppression and anti-authoritarian. It's opposed to the use of theocracy for political gain".

~ Award-winning author ***Philip Pullman*** ("The Golden Compass") from the talk at the Oxford Literary Festival in 2007

"Pullman's portrayal of the "Church" in his book amounts to an attack on dogmatism and the use of religion to oppress, not on CHRISTIANITY itself. I proposed that THE GOLDEN COMPASS be taught as part of religious education in schools."

~ His Eminence the **Archbishop of Canterbury Dr. Rowan Williams**

"The Golden Compass is not an atheistic work but a highly spiritual and reverent piece of writing. Those who attack it as an assault upon religion are mistaken."

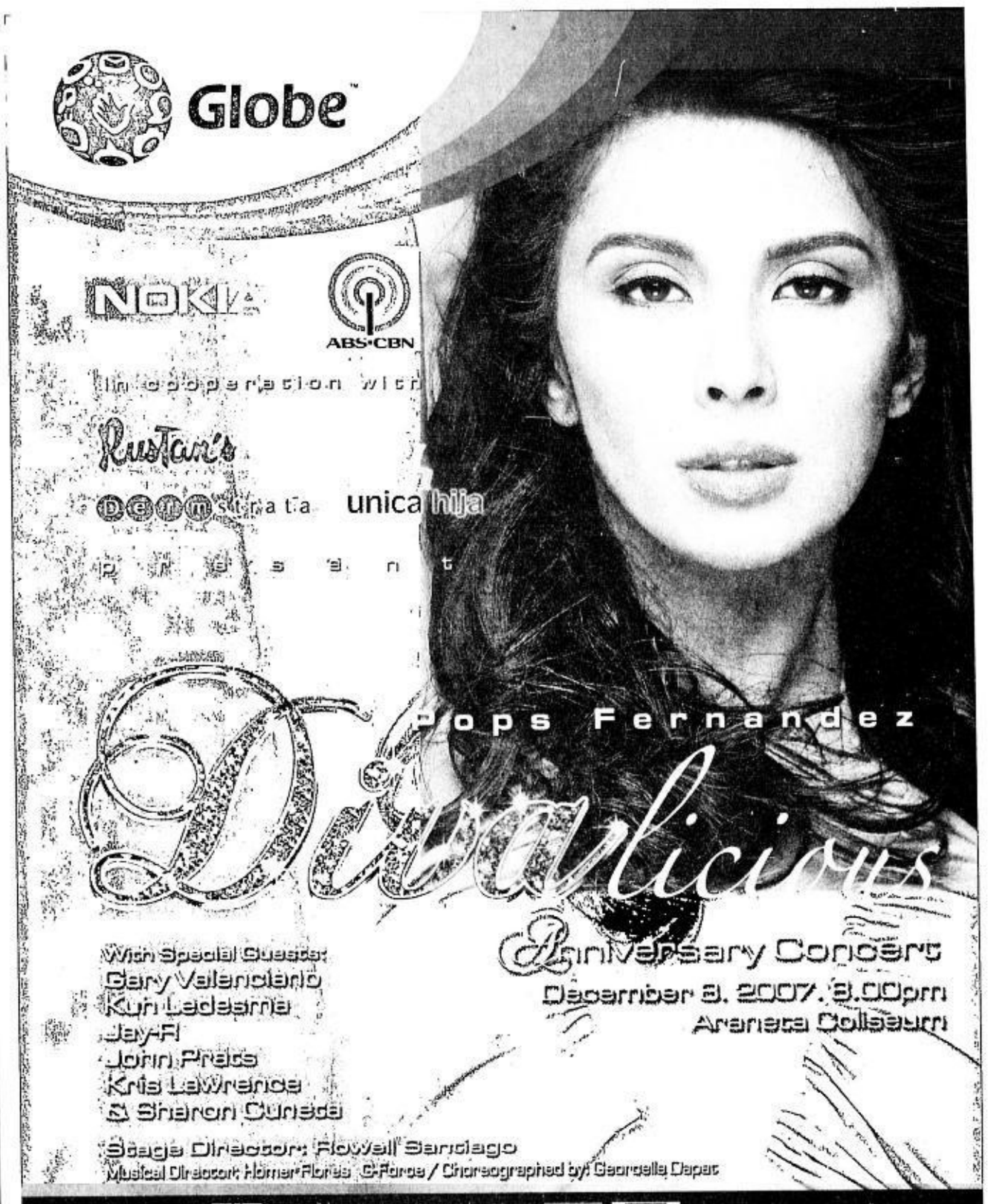
~ The Golden Compass director ***Chris Weitz*** interviewed by British SFX magazine

"The basic essence of the film believes in faith and all the original Christian ideas of love and charity. It's a film against oppression. And there's nothing wrong with that. I don't want the movie apologizing."

~ ***Daniel Craig*** interviewed at 2007 Cannes Film Festival

"I was raised Catholic, the Catholic Church is part of my essence. I wouldn't be able to do this film if I thought it were at all anti-Catholic."

~ ***Nicole Kidman*** from Entertainment Weekly interview



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GREENBELT 3	1 (TRX) MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM (GUARANTEED SEATS)	2 (TRX) THE KINGDOM (GUARANTEED SEATS)		
	3 THE NAMESAKE (GUARANTEED SEATS)	4 FRED CLAUS (GUARANTEED SEATS)	5 ENCHANTED (GUARANTEED SEATS)	
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	3 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM	4 PASUKOB	5 ENCHANTED	
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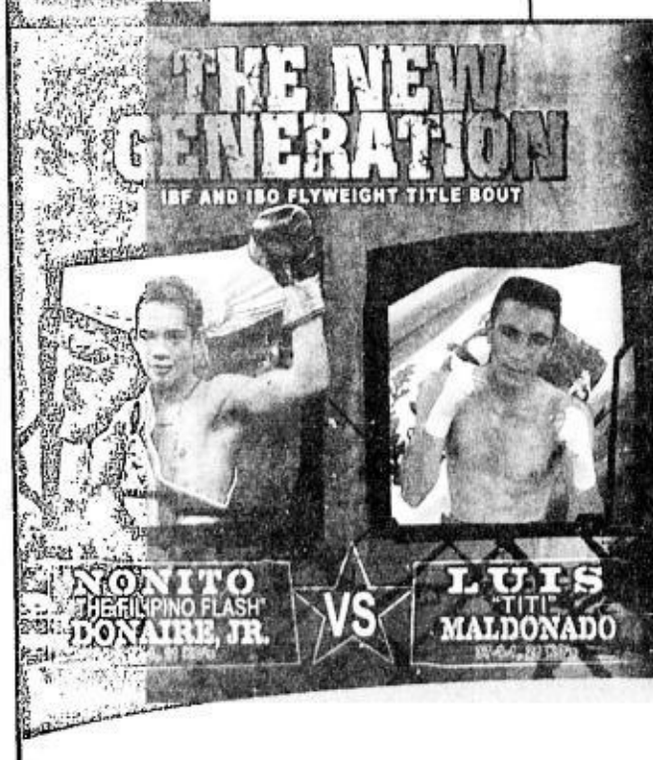
	5 HITMAN	6 ENCHANTED	7 (TRX) THE KINGDOM (GUARANTEED SEATS)	



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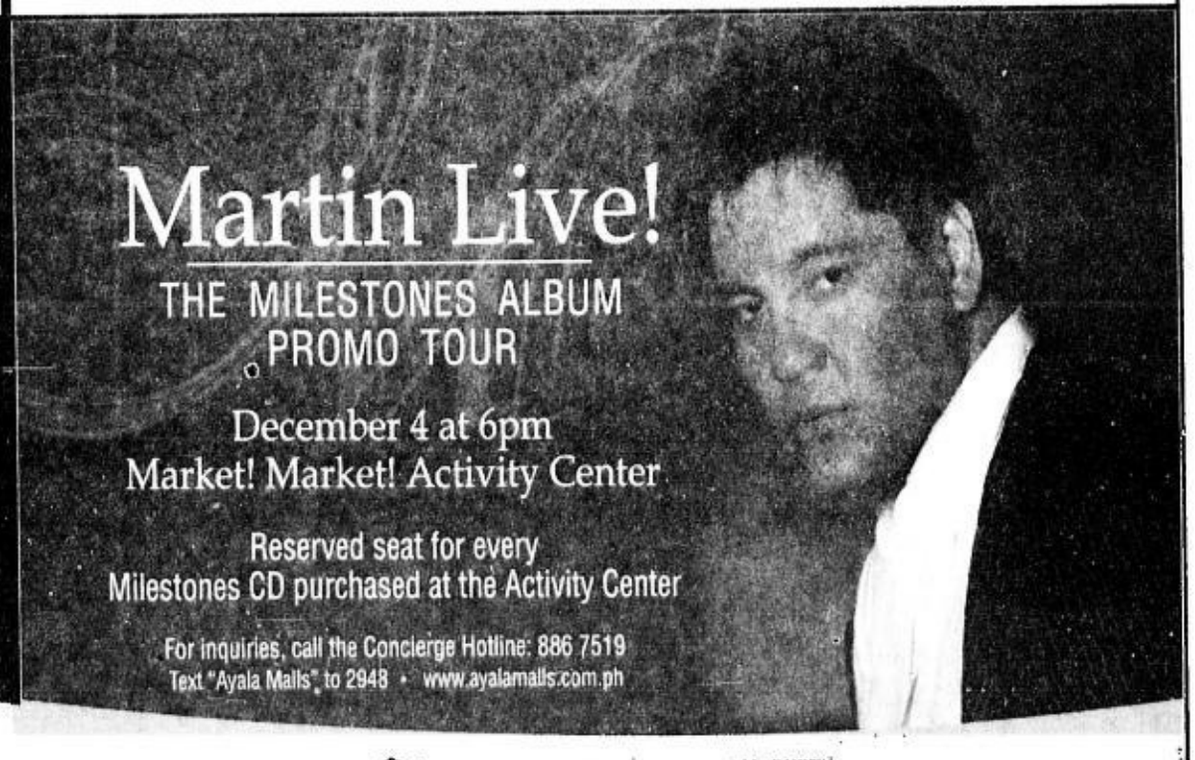

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PER DTI-NCR PERMIT # 4273 SERIES OF 2007

Stage mom's secret: She owes director P150,000

By the INQUIRER Entertainment staff

CONTROVERSIAL STAGE MOM ROUTINEly flaunts her wealth on national television, flashing her bling-bling and shaming those who owe her in cash and kind.

Turns out, CSM should be shamed herself.

She hasn't paid a P150,000 loan she got from a director, back when her equally Controversial Daughter was just this high. Now, that's a long time ago—CD is now beauty-pageant tall.

RUSHES SUNDAY

VHONG Navarro

Playing housemates

Model Hunk from the Kapamilya network is being linked to a Singer Stud from the Kapuso station.

Sounds like a gay version of "Romeo and Juliet," yes.

According to our spy, SS helped MH find a bachelor's pad when the latter had just arrived from abroad. Actually, according to rumors, they shacked up for a while.

Is this true? Spy says, "Next question, please." In show biz lingo, that's a resounding 'yes'!

Lying Singer redux

Remember Lying Singer who was caught in a fib by a TV host?

"Why did LS fake an illness just to get out of that gig?" a TV exec gasped. "She should be grateful that talent coordinators still invite her even though she currently sports another tag: *Salot sa* Ratings. Every time she guests on a show, the ratings dive."

French leave

Rumor has it that Talented Actress didn't bother to finish the premiere screening of her latest movie.

Was TA unhappy with the film's quality (or lack of it)? Next question please.

Desperate Hunk

Drama Hunk can very well join the cast of "Desperate Housewives."

He comes across as "trying hard," a talent manager noted. "He accepts every project—no matter how silly or inconsequential his part."

ROGER MARGALLO

BONG Revilla

Also, DH is using his currently troubled love life to keep himself in the news.

Sitti benched

Sitti is sitting it out.

After an initially strong showing, the bossa nova singer backed out of the ABC 5 celebrity competition, "Shall We Dance."

"She claims she has a previous commitment," a network insider says, not too happily. "Nina and Tuesday Vargas will battle it out in the episode airing tonight."

In trouble again

FISHKILL, New York—Police have filed several charges against hip hop star **Akon** for tossing a teenager off the stage onto another spectator.

The charges stem from an incident June 3 at Dutchess Stadium in Fishkill, about 120 km north of New York City. A spectator lobbed something at Akon and the singer asked the crowd to point out the culprit. A guard picked out a 15-year-old and sent him up the stage, where Akon hoisted him onto his shoulders and flung him away.

Akon, who held a concert in Manila last Thursday, is scheduled to appear in Fishkill Town Court tomorrow morning for arraignment.

In April, he drew criticism for having on-stage simulated sex with a 14-year-old girl at a concert in Trinidad. He later apologized, saying he didn't realize the girl was underage. *AP*

2nd Bond role

LONDON—British actor **Daniel Craig**, who played James Bond in the last "Casino Royale," is set to reprise the role in an as yet untitled se quel.

Craig said in a recent interview, "We are rehearsing stunts and I'm throwing myself off tall buildings ... again." *Reuters*

* * *

Top of the tabloids

The top show biz stories in local tabloids this week. (And why we are moved, if we are moved.)

Hikab factor

- **Cristine** withdraws case vs **Carlene**.
- *Pakikipagbati ni* Cristine *kay* Carlene, *may basbas ni* **Ara**.
- Despite the love controversy, show *ni* **Dennis** No. 1 *pa rin*. (*Yung* "Zaido"? *May* **Marky Cielo** *rin du'n e.*)
- Dennis, feel *balikan si* Cristine.
- Cristine *at* Dennis, four months *nang mag*-on.
- Dahil *nagpakita uli kay* Dennis... Cristine *nakatikim na naman kay* Ara! (*Ate*, get a life!)
- Dennis, *tanggap na wala siyang* "balls."
- Carlene, *ayaw nang makita ang pagmumukha ni* Dennis.
- Carlene, *maghihiganti kay* Dennis! Baby **Calix Andreas**, *itatago!* (Hard to do, with a name like that.)
- *"Gusto ko i-*manage *ang* career *ni* Carlene."—**Lolit Solis** (Not **Piolo**'s or **Sam**'s?)

Speaking of whom...

- Sam *at* Piolo *natutong mag-ingat*. (Is this a euphemism for venue change?)
- Anak *ni* Piolo *matagal na sa* America. (*Matagal na 'yan a.*)

Underwhelming performances

- Concert *ni* **Regine Velasquez** *sa* Aliw Theater, *sumemplang. Wala nang asim?* (*Puro tamis!*)
- **Lani Misalucha** *at* **Martin Nievera**, *parehong walang* career *sa* Amerika.
- Martin, *kumpirmadong 'di pupunta sa* concert *ni* Pops! (*Kami rin!*)

Spell 'protection'

- **Juday** *at* **Buboy**, *inisnab ang* Famas Awards Night.
- *Panunuhol sa* PMPC, *dinenay ng komedyana*. (Of course!)
- Protection money *sa* PMPC, *itinanggi ni* **Jodi Santamaria**! (*Kasi, parang* racket *ang dating*. Er, is that right?)
- *Pagpasok ni* **Angel Locsin** *sa* "PBBCE2" *na*-preempt. (Looks like a dead end.)

MAXENE Magalona RUDY ESPERAS

Secrets no more

- **Dingdong Dantes** and **Kim de los Santos** almost fell in love. (Is there a letter K?)
- **Ai Ai de las Alas** *at* **Antonio Aquitania**, *may lihim na 'relasyon.'*
- **Vhong Navarro** *umamin sa relasyon nila ni* **Valerie Concepcion**. (*Hikab.*)
- Valerie *umamin, may pag-asa sa kanya si* **Pacman**. (*Yan, 'yan pa.*)
- **Rufa Mae Quinto**, *tinuldukan na ang relasyon nila ni* **Erik Santos**.
- **Rachelle Ann Go**, **Christian Bautista**, *hindi bagay kaya nag*-break.

Pretty babies

- **Maxene Magalona**, beauty queen material.
- Maxene Magalona, *bawal magpasilip!*
- *'Pag pinagsabay silang dalawa* ... **Marian Rivera** *magmumukhang kawawa lang kay* **Anne Curtis**! (*Hindi naman.*)

Define 'matatag'

- **Bong** *may reklamo sa* film fest. (*Kami rin!*)
- Bong *'di nagdududa sa nagki-*claim *na anak niya. (Ay,* let's not go there.)
- Bong at **Lani**, *matatag pa rin ang relasyon!* (We need a new dictionary.)

Starting young

- **Shaina-Rayver** team faces outside threat.
- P1M *sa ebidensiyang nag-*date *sina* **John** *at* Shaina.
- Shaina, *ayaw pagkumparahin sina* John *at* Rayver!
- John at Shaina *hiwalay sa Pasko.*
- **Derek** at **Angelica**, *hiwalay sa Pasko? (Gaya-gaya.)*
- Angelica *nagpatapyas man ng* boobs, yummy *pa rin kay* Derek. (*'Yun naman pala e.*)

Boobs and virgins

- Boobs *ni* **Ethel** *nasipa!* (Maybe it was in the way.)
- Virginity *ni* **Riza Santos** type *raw ng mga boys!*
- **Bea** *kay* **John Lloyd** *lang makikipaglaplapan.* (That word again!)
- John Lloyd: Older women are more interesting. (Correct.)

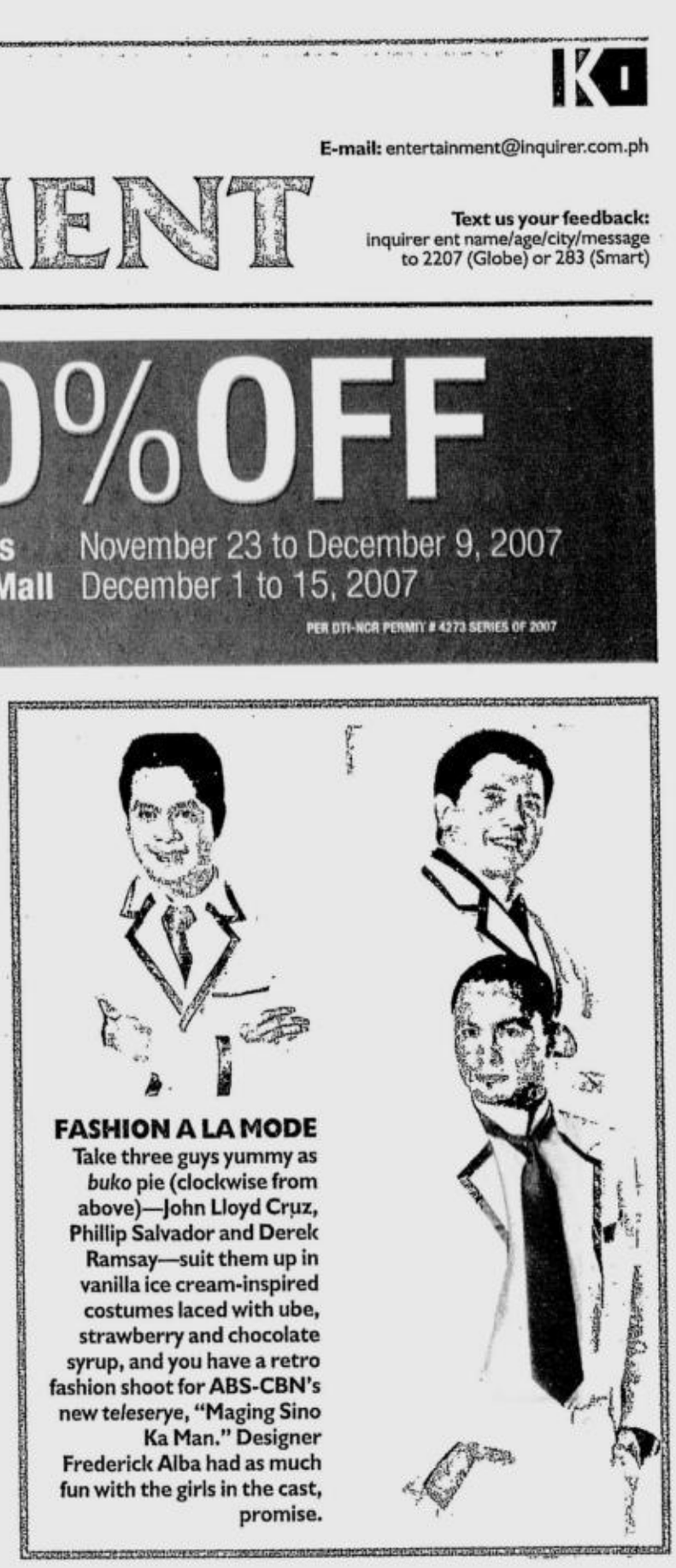
VALERIE Concepcion

- **Alyssa Alano**, type *ang* older men.
- **Katrina Halili** *hahanapin ang* soul mate *sa* Taiwan *o* Korea. (After he appeared to her in a dream and spoke in Chinese. Joke!)
- Katrina, *tinalbugan ni* **Iwa Moto** *sa* FHM.
- **Baron Geisler**, *mas pinili ang yosi at alak kaysa makausap ang nanay.* (This is serious, *ha*?)
- **Jay-R** *at* **Will Devaughn**, *nagpalakihan ng 'bukol!' (Nauntog ba?)*
- *Kasa-kasama hanggang sa* Guam: **Willie Revillame** *ayaw pakawalan si* Ara Mina.

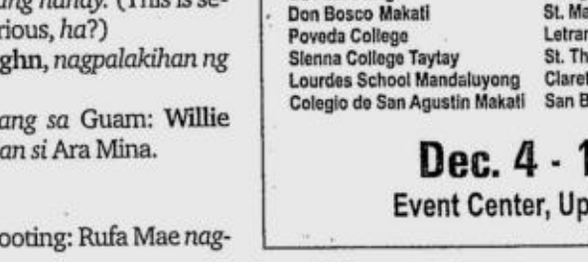
Billing blues

- Cause of delay *ng* shooting: Rufa Mae *naginarte dahil sa* billing.
- **Josh** *takot sa misis ni* **Phillip Salvador**. (What about his mom *kaya*?
- **Richard Gutierrez** doesn't hear from Angel Locsin anymore. (*Kami rin.*)
- Angel *nawawala sa sirkulasyon.* (Exactly what we mean.)
- **Giselle Sanchez** *inireklamo sa kalaswaan.* (Somebody tell her.)
- *Utol ni* **Robin**, *tumakas sa* rehab!
- **Faith Cuneta**, *na*-overdose *sa pagpapaputi.* (*Naging* transparent?)
- **Andrea del Rosario**, *huthutera!* (This word is worse than *laplapan*, don't you think?)
- **Ruffa** at **Annabelle**, *magkagalit na naman.* (Those who care, show of hands, please.)

(Thanks to Abante, Bandera, People's Journal, People's Tonight, Pilipino Star Ngayon, Remate, Tempo, Taliba, Tumbok.)



FASHION A LA MODE
Take three guys yummy as *buko* pie (clockwise from above)—John Lloyd Cruz, Phillip Salvador and Derek Ramsay—suit them up in vanilla ice cream-inspired costumes laced with ube, strawberry and chocolate syrup, and you have a retro fashion shoot for ABS-CBN's new teleserye, "Maging Sino Ka Man." Designer Frederick Alba had as much fun with the girls in the cast, promise.



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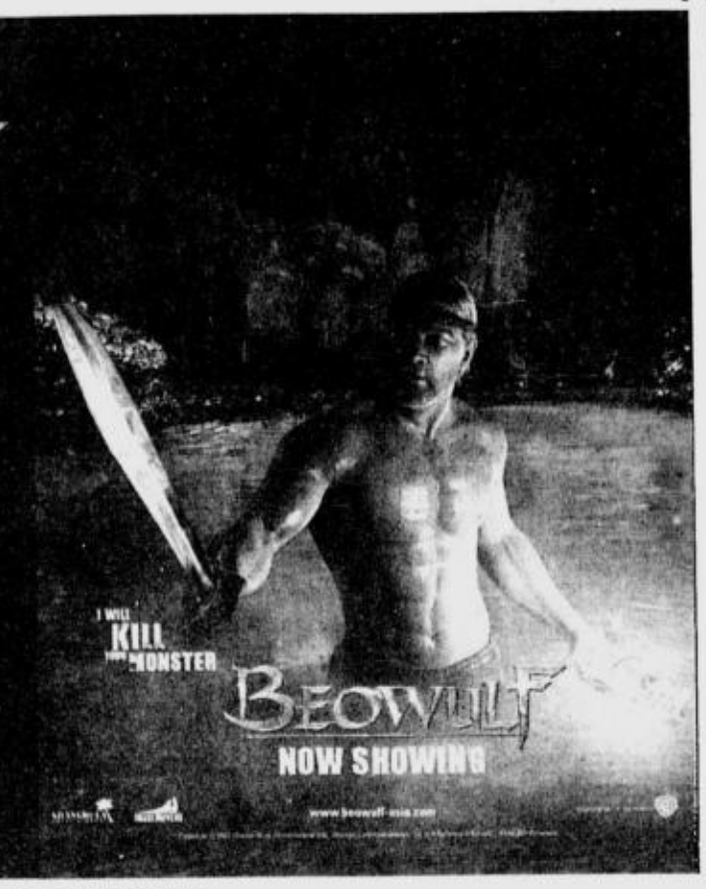

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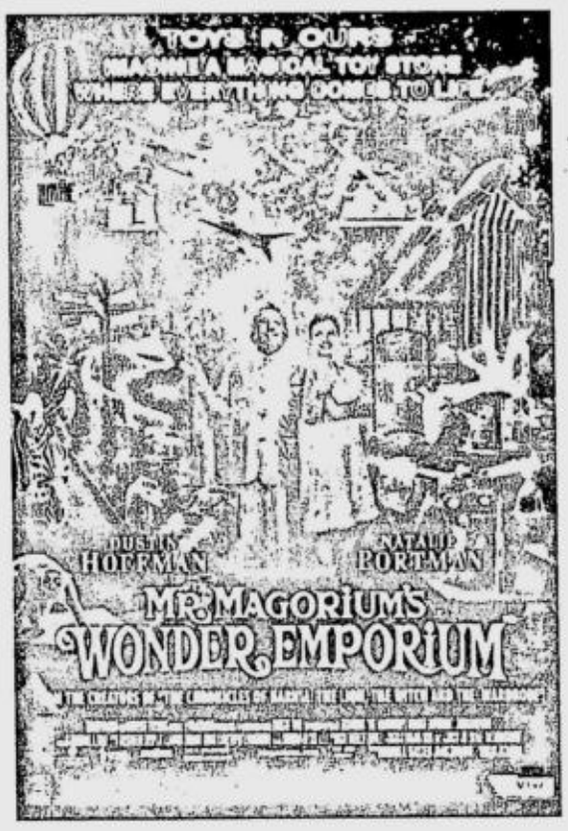

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3 PASUKOB
4 GAME PLAN

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2 ONE MORE CHANCE
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2 LIPSTIK
3 SEX SCANDAL
4 THE SEEKER: DARK IS RISING

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1 ONE MORE CHANCE
2 LANGIT MO KALIGAYAHAN KO
3 ENCHANTED
4 HIGHLANDER
5 PASUKOB

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1 ENCHANTED
2 PASUKOB
3 BEOWULF
4 ONE MORE CHANCE

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GALLERIA

1 HITMAN • THX
1:40 3:40 5:40 7:40 9:40

2 THE KINGDOM
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

3 MR. MAGORIUM's WONDER EMPORIUM
1:15 3:25 5:35 7:45 10:00

4 PASUKOB
1:15 3:25 5:35 7:45 10:00

5 Reserved for VICTORY CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

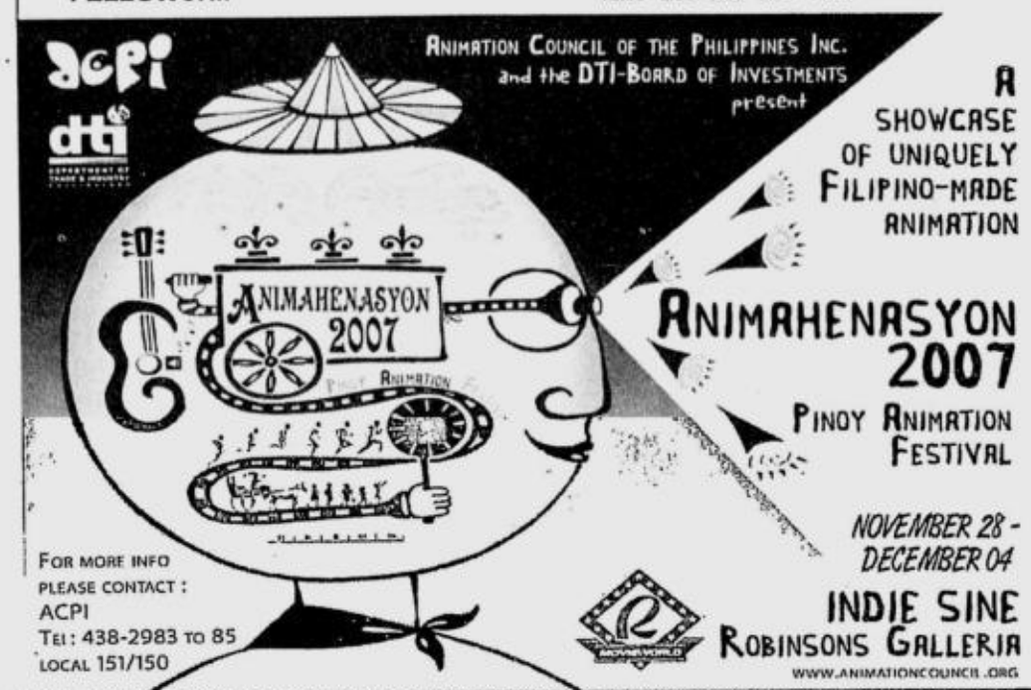
6 Reserved for VICTORY CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

7 FRED CLAUS 12:30 2:50
BEOWULF 5:10 7:35 10:00

8 ANIMAHENASYON: ANIMATION FESTIVAL
1:00 2:30 4:00 5:30 7:00

9 ONE MORE CHANCE
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

10 ENCHANTED
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00



ERMITA

1 PASUKOB
11:10 1:20 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00

2 indieSine: STILL LIFE
2:00 4:00 6:00

3 BOOGEYMAN 2
12:50 2:40 4:30 6:20 8:10 10:00

4 HITMAN
12:25 2:20 4:15 6:10 8:05 10:00

5 ENCHANTED
11:35 1:40 3:45 5:50 7:55 10:00

6 ONE MORE CHANCE
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00

7 BEOWULF
Midtown 12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

1 FRED CLAUS
2:35 5:05 7:35 10:00

2 THE KINGDOM
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

3 MR. MAGORIUM's WONDER EMPORIUM
12:25 2:20 4:15 6:10 8:05 10:00

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METRO EAST

1 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00

2 PASUKOB
12:30 2:40 4:50 7:00 9:10

3 ONE MORE CHANCE
10:45 1:20 3.55 6:30 9:05

4 FRED CLAUS
11:20 1:40 4:00 6:20 9:00

5 BEOWULF
1:05 3:35 6:20 9:00

6 THE KINGDOM
12:05 2:15 4:25 6:35 9:00

7 HITMAN
12:05 2:15 4:25 6:35 9:00

8 ENCHANTED
12:40 2:45 4:50 6:55 9:00

NOVALICHES

1 THE KINGDOM
2 PASUKOB
3 ENCHANTED
4 ONE MORE CHANCE
5 FRED CLAUS
8 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM

PIONEER

1 MR. MAGORIUM's WONDER EMPORIUM
2 THE KINGDOM
3 PASUKOB
4 ENCHANTED

STA. ROSA

1 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
2 ONE MORE CHANCE
3 ENCHANTED
4 PASUKOB

LIPA

1 BEOWULF
2 PASUKOB
3 ENCHANTED
4 ONE MORE CHANCE

DASMARINAS

1 ENCHANTED
2 THE KINGDOM
3 ONE MORE CHANCE
4 PASUKOB
5 FRED CLAUS

IMUS

1 FRED CLAUS
2 THE KINGDOM
3 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
4 PASUKOB
5 ONE MORE CHANCE

ANGELES

1 LIONS FOR LAMBS
2 PASUKOB
3 ONE MORE CHANCE
4 ENCHANTED

TARLAC

1 THE SEEKER: Dark is Rising
2 APAT DAPAT DAPAT APAT
3 RENDITION

STARMILLS

1 ENCHANTED
2 HITMAN
3 ONE MORE CHANCE
4 PASUKOB
5 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
6 LIONS FOR LAMBS

BACOLOD

1 30 DAYS OF NIGHT
2 ONE MORE CHANCE
3 indieSine: ISNATS
4 PASUKOB
5 ENCHANTED
6 beowulf

ILOILO

1 30 DAYS OF NIGHT
2 ONE MORE CHANCE
3 PASUKOB
4 LIONS FOR LAMB
5 ENCHANTED
6 BEOWULF

GMA

Mga Kapuso, nananatili po tayong No. 1 sa mga pangunahing lungsod sa buong bansa...

OVERALL CHANNEL RATINGS

Combined areas of Metro Cebu, Metro Davao & Iloilo City and Mega Manila TOTAL DAY

GMA	ABS-CBN	DIFF (GMA-ABS)
17.6	16.1	1.5

AGB Nielsen MEGATAM & MCTAM, Nov 1 - 17

...pati sa buong Luzon, kung saan nagmumula ang 76% ng total TV audience ng Pilipinas...

OVERALL CHANNEL RATINGS

TOTAL LUZON TOTAL DAY

GMA	ABS-CBN	DIFF (GMA-ABS)
17.6	16.4	1.2

AGB Nielsen NUTAM Nov 1 - 17

...at lalo na sa Mega Manila!

OVERALL CHANNEL RATINGS

MEGA MANILA* TOTAL DAY

GMA	ABS-CBN	DIFF (GMA-ABS)
19.0	14.6	4.4

All Top Weekday Primetime Shows* are on GMA Telebabad

Zaido	*36.6*	*Kamandag*	*41.4*	*MariMar*	*45.3*
Kokey	*26.5*	*Pangarap Na Bituin*	*23.2*	*Lastikman*	*21.5*
Princess Sarah	*25.6*				
La Vendetta	*30.3*	*Hwang Jini (Mon-Thur)*	*22.0*	*Hwang Jini (Fri)*	*23.6*
PBB Celebrity Ed. 2	*25.1*	*Ysabella*	*20.1*	*Maalaala Mo Kaya*	*19.1*

All Top Shows by Program Type* are on GMA

GENRE	PROGRAM	CHANNEL	RATING %
Animation	Slamdunk	GMA	20.1
Drama (daytime)	Kung Mahawi Man Ang Ulap / Daisy Siete	GMA	22.5
Drama (primetime)	MariMar	GMA	45.3
Comedy/Gag Shows	Bitoy's Funniest Videos	GMA	33.3
Game Shows	Kakasa Ka Ba Sa Grade 5?	GMA	29.1
General Talk Show	Mel & Joey	GMA	25.8
General Variety	Eat Bulaga	GMA	22.3
Musical / Variety	Sobrang Okey Pare	GMA	15.7
Newscast	24 Oras	GMA	32.6
Public Affairs / Feature / Informational Magazine	Kapuso Mo, Jessica Soho	GMA	30.4
Public Affairs Docu / Investigative Show	Imbestigador	GMA	24.0
Showbiz Talk Show	Showbiz Central	GMA	15.2

Kaya naman po ginagawa namin ang lahat upang patuloy kaming makapaghatid ng mga programang inyong kagigiliwan at susubaybayan.

*AGB Nielsen Media Research Phils. (Arianna) Overall Channel Ratings: 6am - 12mn, TV Households. Nov 1 - 27, Nov 18 - 27 based on overnight ratings

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2007

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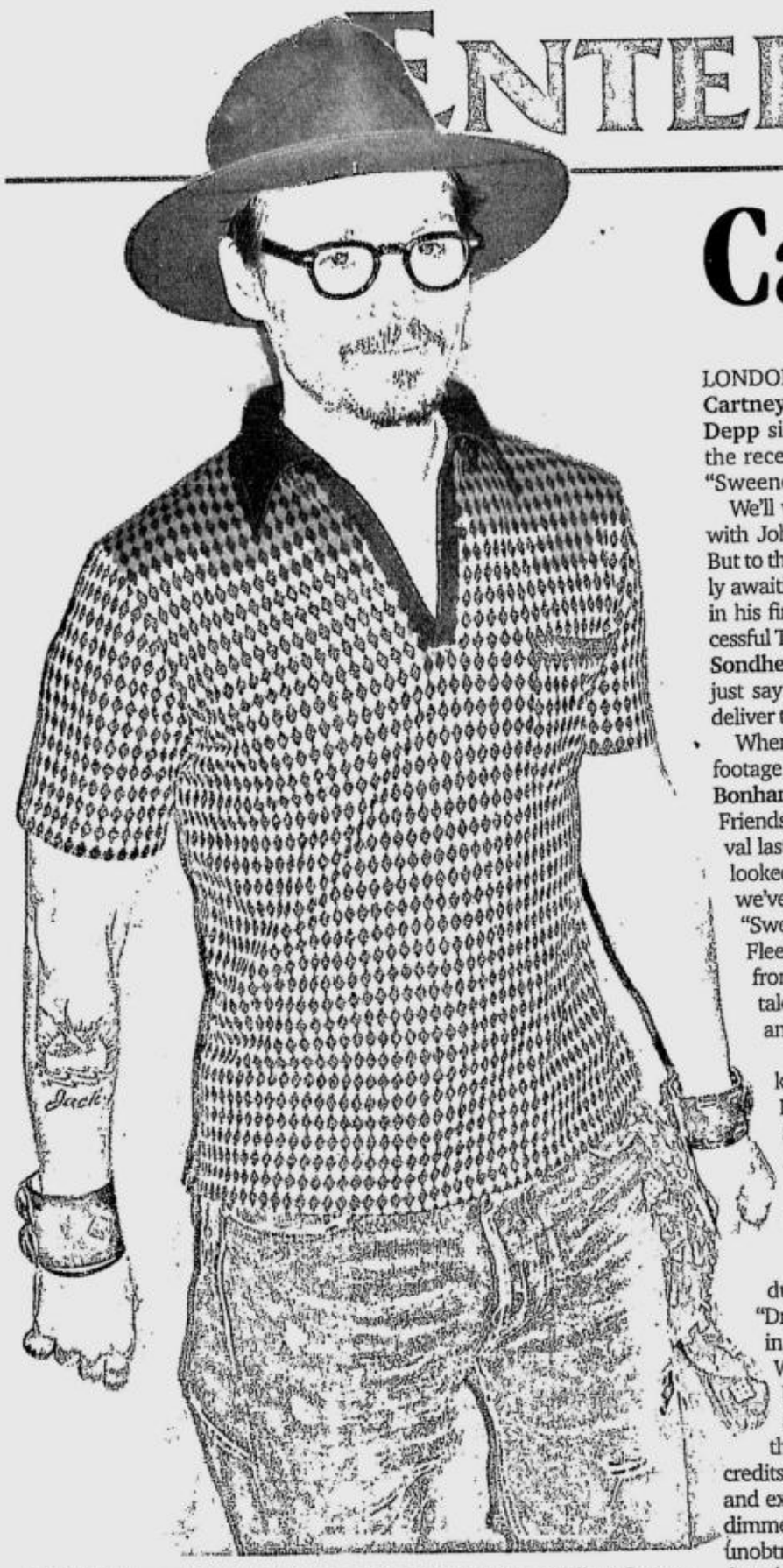
Can Johnny Depp sing?

Paul McCartney attends special screening to watch and hear the actor hit those notes in 'Sweeney Todd'



JOHNNY Depp: He's bloody fine as the demon barber of Fleet Street in "Sweeney Todd." RUBEN V. NEPALES

LONDON—NO LESS THAN SIR **PAUL MCCartney** showed up to watch **Johnny Depp** sing for the first time in a movie at the recent screening here of **Tim Burton's** "Sweeney Todd."

We'll write about our interview with Johnny in a future column. But to those who have been eagerly awaiting word on how he fares in his first musical, and how successful Tim is in adapting **Stephen Sondheim's** dark operetta, let's just say that ... Johnny and Tim deliver the goods!

When we saw an eight-minute footage of Johnny and **Helena Bonham Carter** singing "My Friends" at the Venice Film Festival last September, we thought it looked promising. Now that we've seen the movie (full title, "Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street"), we're happy to say that, from the first scene, it is a "slashingly" fine tale of music, murder, bloody revenge and strangely delicious meat pies.

Tim's gamble to cast thespians not known for musical talents—his wife Helena, **Alan Rickman** (Professor Snape in the "Harry Potter" movies), **Sacha Baron Cohen** ("Borat" as another flamboyant character, Signor Pirelli) and Johnny, of course—paid off handsomely.

Producer Richard Zanuck (co-producer of the 1989 Oscar Best Picture, "Driving Miss Daisy," introduced the film in the special screening at the Odeon West End on Leicester Square that drew big British stars—actors **Ian McKellen** and **Patrick Stewart, Nicholas Hytner**, the award-winning stage director whose credits include **Lea Salonga's** "Miss Saigon," and ex-Beatle Paul who snuck in as the lights dimmed and went out of the theater, just as unobtrusively, as the film's end credits rolled. (London is abuzz with reports that Sir Paul is dating two Americans—actress **Rosanna Arquette** and trucking heiress **Nancy Shevell**.

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ruben V. Nepales

At a post-screening reception, Richard told us that he had jumped at the chance to work with Tim and Stephen because he considers them the Van Gogh and Picasso of modern entertainment. We met the film's young actors—**Jayne Wisener** (who plays Johanna), **Jamie Campbell Bower** (Anthony) and **Edward Sanders** (Toby, Pirelli's boy assistant). Casting these film neophytes was another gamble on Tim's part—but the three acquit themselves well.

The next morning, we had press cons with Helena, Tim, Alan and Stephen. It was a pleasure talking to Stephen, who wrote the music and lyrics of such gems as "Into the Woods," "Company," "Sunday in the Park with George," "Passion" and "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum" and, as lyricist, "West Side Story" and "Gypsy."

Long day

The following day was a long one—press cons with the cast of "The Golden Compass," the epic fantasy adventure which New Line Cinema hopes will be its next "The Lord of the Rings" blockbuster franchise.

The talents included **Daniel Craig** and **Eva Green** (by coincidence, 007 and the Bond Girl), **Nicole Kidman, Sam Elliott**, director **Chris Weitz** and **Dakota Blue Richards**, the 12-year-old newcomer chosen from over 10,000 young actresses to play the crucial role of Lyra Belacqua, main character in this film adaptation of "The Golden Compass" ("Northern Lights" in the UK), the first book in Philip Pullman's trilogy known as "His Dark Materials."

Some groups that claim the books are anti-Christian are calling for a boycott of the film. We asked Nicole and company about this issue. We'll discuss it in a coming column.

We were in the same LA to London flight with **Sam Elliott**, who quipped as we claimed our luggage at the Heathrow airport, "We could have done the interview on the plane." There was no mistaking that beautiful, distinctive voice, as unique as his long silver hair and handlebar mustache. With him was **Cleo Rose**, his daughter with wife, actress **Katharine Ross**, memorable to this day in her bicycle scene with **Paul Newman** and "Raindrops Keep Fallin' On My Head" as the musical background in "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid."

"GOLLUM" turns filmmaker: Andy Serkis, a guest at the "Compass" premiere party, said he is making his directorial debut with "Dark Blue Rising." RUBEN V. NEPALES

In the evening, New Line threw a huge party following the premiere of "The Golden..." The guests were transported from Leicester Square to the Tobacco Dock, a huge former warehouse. The complex's two floors were decorated to suggest the icy north, setting of the film's second half. Replicas of the powerful polar bear towered over the cavernous place.

The cast mingled with special guests, which included Gollum himself, Andy Serkis. Amid

CAN/L3

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ENCORE

Atlantis Productions' staging of the Tony-award-winning musical "Avenue Q" will have a repeat performance from Dec. 14-23 at the Carlos P. Romulo Auditorium, RCBC Plaza in Makati. Directed by Bobby Garcia and Chari Arespacochaga, the musical about life in New York City top-bills Rachel Alejandro, Aiza Seguerra, Franchie Dy and Joel Trinidad.

No 'Sakal' sequel for him

By Marinel R. Cruz

AWARD-WINNING WRITER-FILMmaker Jose Javier Reyes was adamant when he said he would not be part of any sequel to "Sakal, Sakali, Saklolo," his latest film—which, in itself is a sequel to the box-office hit "Kasal, Kasali, Kasalo.".

"I know when it's time to leave," Reyes said at the press conference for "Sakal," Star Cinema's entry to the Metro Manila Film Festival in December. "I promise myself there would be no more sequels. *Kung mayroon man, hindi na ako ang gagawa n'un.* I've done all I can for this film."

"Kasal," also directed by Reyes, was the highest grosser in the 2006 Metro Manila Film Festival.

Would "SSS" measure up? Thats entirely up to the audiences, Reyes said. "I just had fun doing 'Sakal,' I didn't think about surpassing 'KKK.'"

In last year's film fest, Star Cinema managing director Malou Santos protested the Best Picture award given to Octo-Arts/M-Zet's "Enteng Kabisote 3," top earner in the first three days. By the end of the two-week run, however, "KKK" had overtaken it. (A big part of the criteria for Best Picture is box-office performance.)

"I never aspire for awards," Reyes said. "Trophies are important, but they are not the end-all and be-all of [movie-making]." He said he was thankful to the Filipino Academy of Movie Arts and Sciences (Famas) for three citations he received last week—Best Picture, Best Screenplay and Best Story trophies, all for "KKK."

JOSE Javier Reyes

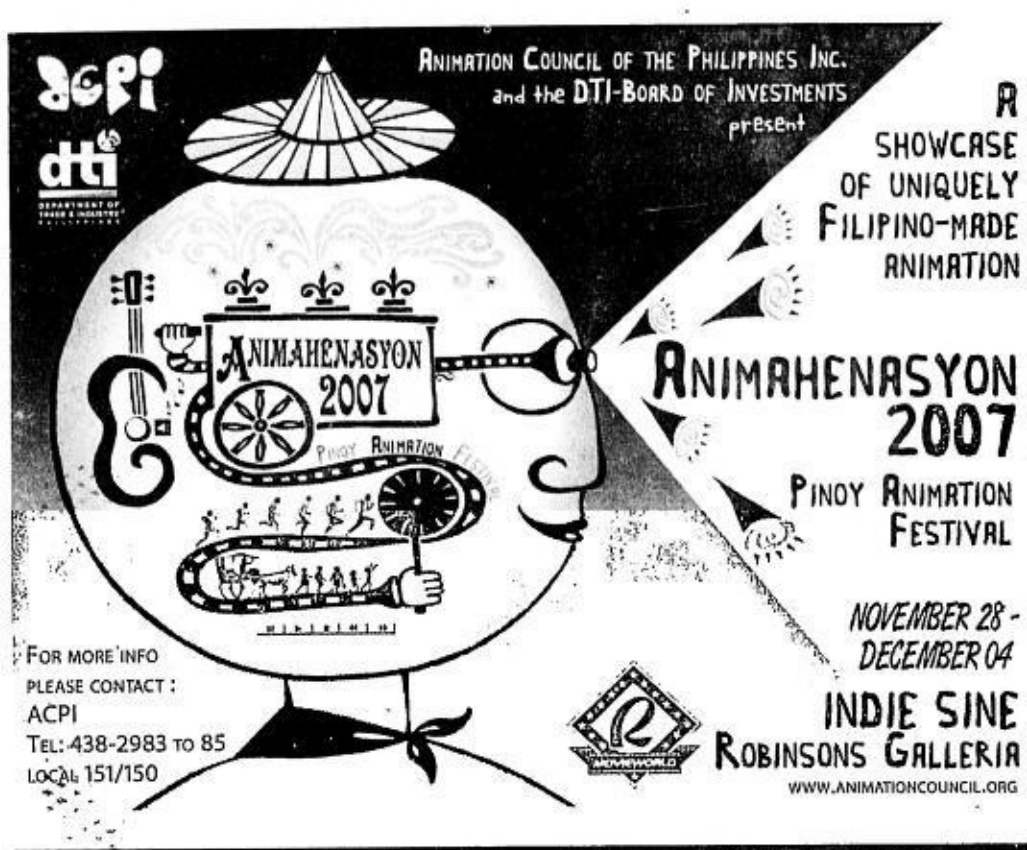
ALL IN THE FAMILY. Ryan Agoncillo and Judy Ann Santos (foreground) with (from left) Gloria Diaz, Ariel Ureta, Timothy Chan, Soliman Cruz and Gina Pareño.

Most memorable

"KKK" is about the highs and lows of a newly married couple, "SSS" shows how they cope with the demands of parenthood. The film takes off as Angie (Judy Ann Santos) and Jed's (Ryan Agoncillo) son turns four years old.

Most memorable scenes for Reyes were those shot in Barcelona, Spain. "Barcelona is one of the most beautiful cities in the world," he said. "*Mababait pa ang mga Pinoy doon.*"

"SSS" also stars Gloria Diaz, Ariel Ureta, Gina Pareño, Soliman Cruz, Tuesday Vargaz, Ketchup Eusebio and Dominic Ochoa.



Some comediennes are too feisty for comfort

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

IN LOCAL SHOW BUSINESS, comedy is pretty much a field dominated by men. This doesn't really make sense, but one explanation is that men are more willing than women to make fools of themselves just to get a laugh.

Also, the locally popular "comedy of insult" may turn off some women; hence the greater number of in-your-face male comics.

On the other hand, more *palaban* comediennes have been making their bid for popularity in the last few years. Quite a number of them are of the "sexy starlet" variety. In the past, they were *palaban* when it came to being seductive, but they have transposed that feistiness to their new career as laugh-makers.

Screaming variety

Unfortunately, some comediennes are too feisty for comfort, especially those of the *babaeng bakla* variety. They scream, shock and carry on like a house on fire, and stun rather than amuse viewers into attention.

Seen in this context, local show biz's top comediennes include **Ai Ai de las Alas, Rufa Mae Quinto, Tessie Tomas, Mitch Valdes, Eugene Domingo** and **Pokwang**.

Ai Ai tops the list because she has TV and film hits to her name, especially the mega-blockbuster, "Ang Tanging Ina." Instructively, however, her subsequent starrers failed to match that production's standout success. On TV, too, Ai Ai has been busier in the past, so her pacesetter position is being threatened by currently busier comediennes.

For instance, Rufa Mae Quinto has never been busier. She has numerous TV shows and a good number of movies. Rufa's combination of sexiness and ditziness calls **Goldie Hawn** and **Carmi Martin** to mind—but, the busty and wriggly Ms. Quinto is even sexier than her predecessors.

Her main liability at this point is her tendency to fall back on facile expressions that used to be trendy but have now become quite trite from overuse.

Tessie Tomas is the best comedienne of them all, except that she's much less active than she used to be. Her talent for impersonation is similarly unmatched, so we hope that TT will accept more offers to perform next year.

Ditto for Mitch Valdes, who's our top comedy-musical star. She specializes in zingy one-person club acts that mine her personal experiences for great comedy and insights into human nature.

For her part, **Eugene Domingo** has been making her mark as a comedienne only in the past two years, and yet she's as busy as can be. While she's become popular by going the regulation hysterical-comedy route, we feel that Eugene can be a cut above her shrieking peers—if only her producers and directors will let her.

Another relatively new comedienne, Pokwang, gets lower marks, because she has more consistently embraced the hysterical approach with gusto. It's understandable why she would go this way, since other comics do it as well, but it's been pretty much done to death, so please give stressed-out viewers a rest, and desist.

Movies on Cinemax

This month, Cinemax offers the viewing treats: "All Quiet on the Western Front" with **Lew Ayres**, "Apollo 13" with **Tom Hanks**, "Battle of the Bulge" with **Henry Fonda**, "Breakfast at Tiffany's" with **Audrey Hepburn** and **George Peppard**.

"Dog Day Afternoon" with **Al Pacino** and **John Cazole**, "Easy Rider" with **Peter Fonda** and **Dennis Hopper**, "Every Which Way But Loose" with **Clint Eastwood** and **Sandra Locke**.

"Funny Face" with **Fred Astaire** and **Audrey Hepburn**, "Once Upon A Time in the West" with **Charles Brown** and **Henry Fonda**, "The Fugitive" with **Harrison Ford** and **Tommy Lee Jones**, "The Lost Boys." "Tobruk" with **Rock Hudson** and **George Peppard**, "White Christmas" with **Bing Crosby** and **Danny Kaye**, "Wyatt Earp" with **Kevin Costner**.

Isabella

DESPERATELY
Pretending...

SOON IN THEATERS

Stephanie

DESPERATELY
In Love...

SOON IN THEATERS

Historic team-up: Pilita, Pateña in Baguio

By Elizabeth Lolarga
Contributor

BAGUIO CITY—ON THE SAME stage, two sultry singers, both icons of the '60s, could be dream-role inspirations for seasoned impersonators.

But nothing beats the original Pilita Corrales and Carmen Pateña, who appeared for the first time as a tandem in the concert "Live" on Wednesday night at the Baguio Country Club.

Corrales opened the show, crooning "A Million Thanks to You," and doing her signature back bends, and Pateña closed it with her bravura version of "This Is My Life."

Hilarious ad libs

In between songs, the troupers—whose energy levels and slinky outfits belied their senior citizen status—had the audience in stitches with hilarious ad libs. They beamed whenever wolf whistles resounded in the cold night air.

At one point, Pateña called piano accompanist Bert Robledo "the bandleader," then realized there was no band backing him up. He shouted at her, "*Bandido* (bandit)!"

One of her false eyelashes dropped on the floor when her tears fell as she belted out her last song. She and Corrales walked upstage and down afterwards looking for the thing, a scene that seemed straight out of a Marx Brothers movie—only better, because it was unscripted.

Indulging audience

The singers might have forgotten some lyrics when they did their encore of Christmas carols, but members of the audience were indulging, and sang the lines back at them.

The following day over lunch that included dishes she had been pining for (*dinengneng* and *pinapaitan*) at Iggy's Inn on South Drive here, Pateña confirmed that the repartee between her and Corrales was unrehearsed. The give and take was natural, she stressed.

She said it took them so long to team up for a concert because of intrigues sown by some entertainment writers who put words in her and Corrales' mouths.

"*Pinag-aaway kami* (They made us fight). Like, someone wrote that Pilita declined because *lalampasuhin ko raw siya* (I would overwhelm her). The media are wrong. We're not trying to outdo one another."

She said she had always admired Corrales ever since she was a girl of 16 watching the singer from Cebu perform at the Nautilus Night Club on Dewey (now Roxas) Blvd.

Pateña whispered to her mother, "*Lalagpasan ko siya* (I will surpass her)." The older woman responded, "*Anak, baka nilalagnat ka* (Child, you might be running a fever)."

Dream fulfilled

Young Pateña went on to place second in the "Tawag ng Tanghalan" amateur singing contest and to fulfill her dream of traveling far.

In 1961, after singing "Climb Every Mountain" in Hong Kong, Englishmen in the audience approached and told her that she sounded like Shirley Bassey. "Who's that?" she asked.

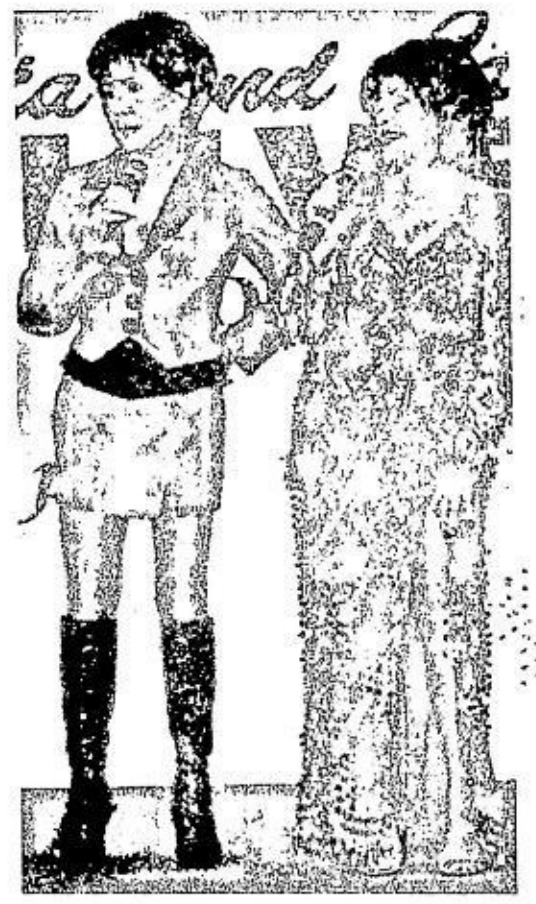
The next day her brother bought her all the Bassey records, saying, "It's not because you're my sister, but who is copying whom?"

Falling in love

Pateña said she had a show at the New York Town Hall in the 1980s "to escape the humdrum of Philippine life." When it was time to go home, she met and fell in love with Dr. Adolf Ayuyao, a surgeon, got married and ended up staying in the US for over two decades.

She came home last year and decided to stay for good, helping her brother David, a pastor, raise funds through the sales of her CD so a new roof could be built over his United Methodist Church in Pandacan. The old one was blown away by Typhoon Milenyo.

After the historic team-up with Corrales, the singers are preparing for another one on Feb. 14 next year at the Esplanade of the SM Mall of Asia in Pasay City.



CARMEN Pateña on Pilita Corrales: "We're not trying to outdo one another."

RUBEN V. NEPALES

DIRECTOR Tim Burton

Can Johnny Depp...

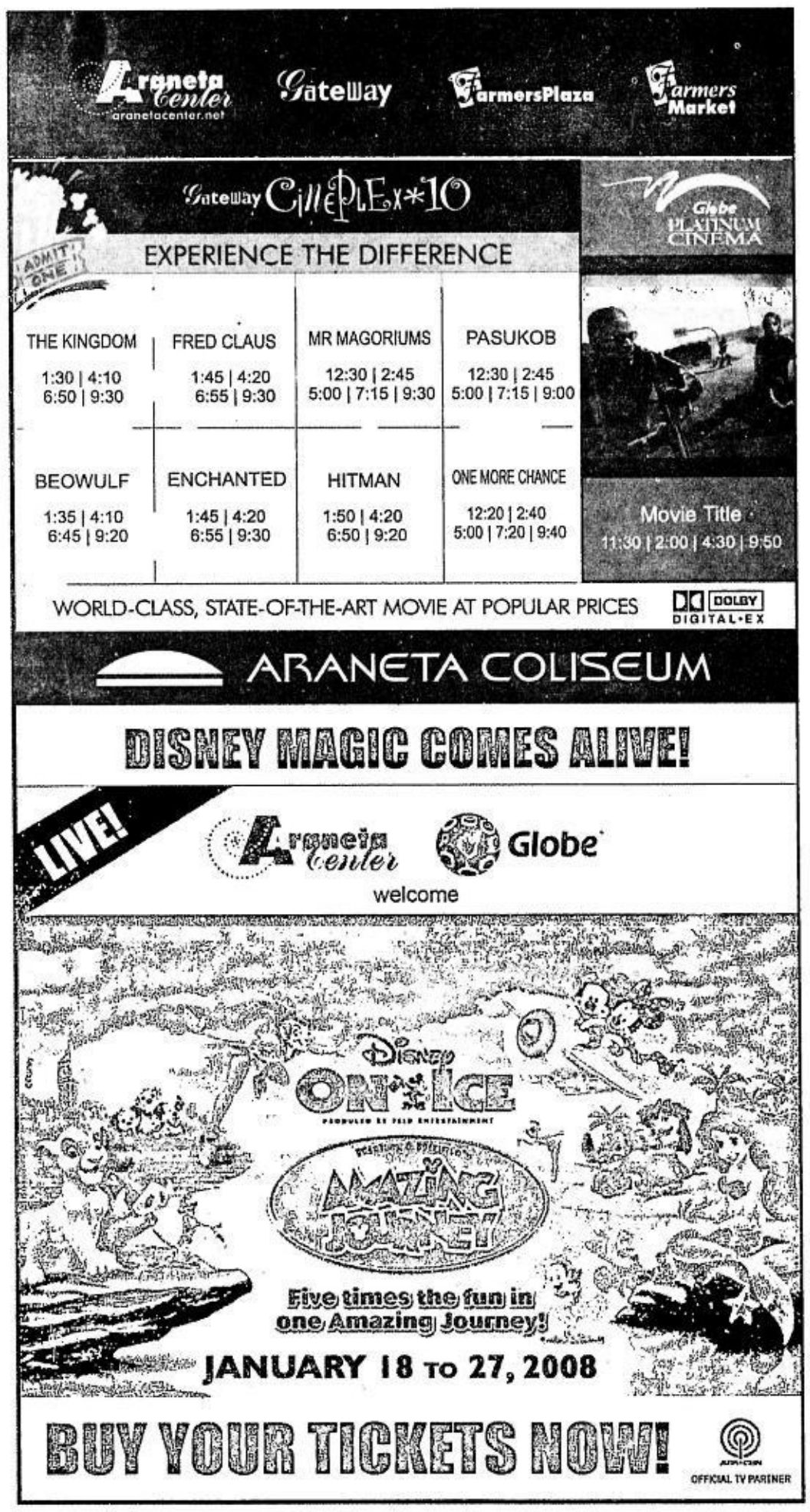
From page L1

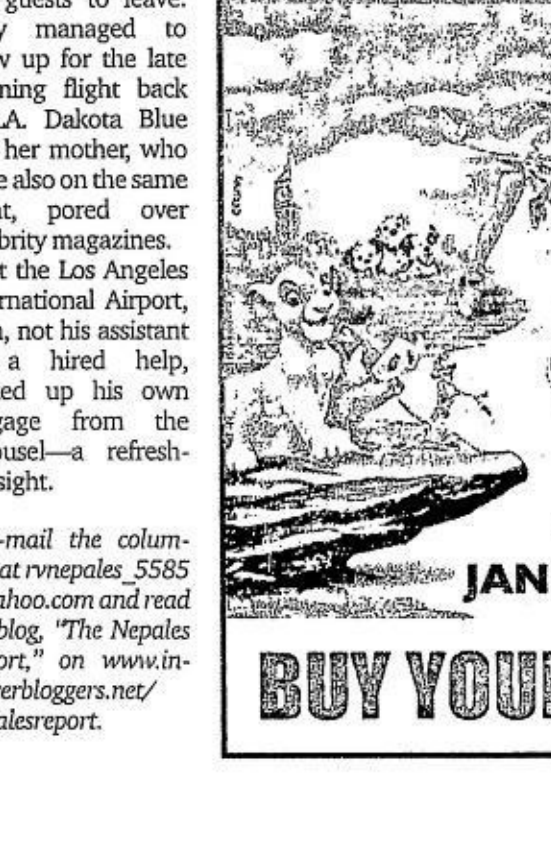
the party din, Andy said he's getting ready to direct his first film, "Dark Blue Rising." On her first big premiere night, Dakota Blue ran around with her friends.

Sam and Cleo Rose stayed past midnight and were among the last guests to leave. They managed to show up for the late morning flight back to LA. Dakota Blue and her mother, who were also on the same flight, pored over celebrity magazines.

At the Los Angeles International Airport, Sam, not his assistant or a hired help, picked up his own luggage from the carousel—a refreshing sight.

E-mail the columnist at rvnepales_5585@yahoo.com and read his blog, "The Nepales Report," on www.inquirerbloggers.net/nepalesreport.

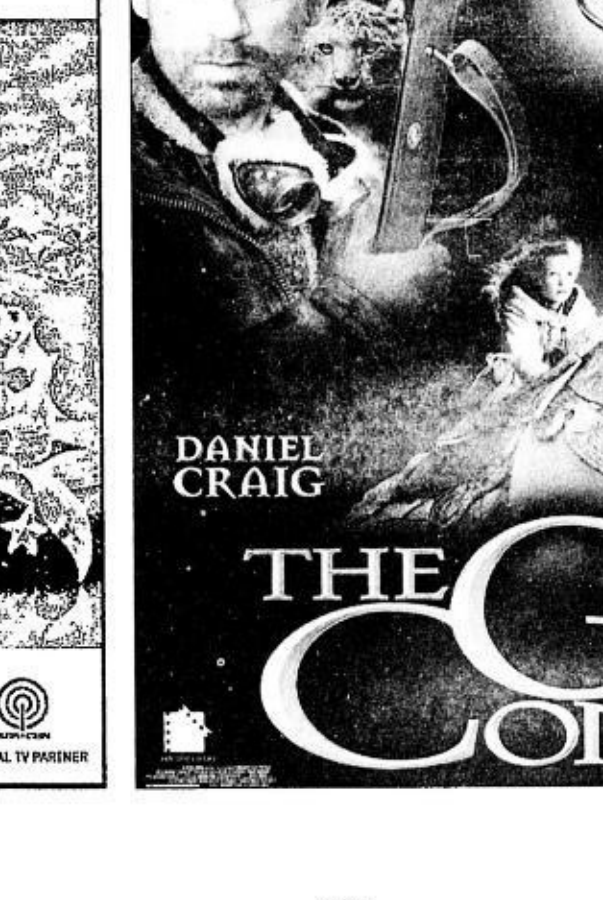




Courtney

DESPERATE
For Love...

SOON IN THEATERS



Patricia

Just
DESPERATE.

SOON IN THEATERS

White Christmas in Manila

CARTOON NETWORK HOSTS winter wonderland fun with Cartoon Network Snow-ville, where kids can meet their favorite toon stars, play with "snow" and enjoy games and activities for free until Dec. 30 at SM Mall of Asia.

Kids ride the CN sleigh, have their face painted, and get a CN ornament.

They can also have their photos taken with their favorite toons in a snowy setting.

Games include decking Billy up to make him the red-nosed reindeer or helping Ben 10's Four Arms win the snowball fight!

For details, kids may check out www.cartoonnetwork.com.ph.

Tryouts

KID FIT

Network Production, a division of People's Music Training Center, is looking for smart and talented kids for a new pop singing group to be signed by Mega Records.

Applicants between the ages of 8 and 12, with good singing voice, strong personality and stage presence may apply in person at 117-A S. Macaya St. Bgy. Pasong Tamo, Tandang Sora, Quezon City on Dec. 9, 1-5 p.m.

Applicants are required to bring their resumé with whole and half-body photos, and minus-one or VCD.

Santas and superhumans

IN "12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS EVE," HIGH-powered businessman Calvin Carter (Steven Weber) puts work before everything else, leaving him with a family in chaos and a crumbling relationship with business associates and employees.

On Christmas Eve, Calvin chooses to close a billion-dollar deal instead of spending the holidays at home.

His triumphant night soon turns into a nightmare when disaster unexpectedly strikes and he wakes up in a hospital. He then learns that he has just 12 chances to set things right or risk the consequence of never seeing another Christmas again.

The movie airs on Dec. 13, 10 p.m. on Hallmark Channel.

On Dec. 23 at 9 p.m., Hallmark features "Meet the Santas," the sequel to the holiday romantic comedy "Single Santa Seeks Mrs. Claus."

Christmas is only four days away and Nick Claus (Steve Guttenberg), heir to the North Pole throne, must get on with the "I Do's" or the holidays can't happen.

Crystal Bernard reprises her role as Beth Marshall, the bride-to-be who reluctantly enlists the help of her prim society mother (Mariette Hartley) for the overwhelming wedding preparations.

But trouble brews when Beth's mother, a woman who's yet to be let in on her future son-in-law's frosty occupation, casts doubts on Nick's sanity and family background.

"THE REAL Superhumans"

Amazing real people

Discovery Channel's "The Real Superhumans" features amazing stories of real people with unique abilities.

Through the lives of four "super humans," the program shows how humans may be evolving, and highlights the latest cutting-edge developments in science and technology that provide insight to the next generation of superheroes.

Among these amazing real people is a painter from Turkey who has been compared with Renaissance master Brunelleschi, even though he was born blind in both eyes. Blind since birth, he is a visual artist who can draw and paint in three-point perspective.

The show premieres Dec. 9 at 9 p.m, with replays on the following dates: Dec. 10, 12 a.m., 8 a.m. and 2 p.m.; Dec. 15 at 2 p.m.; and Dec. 16 at 8 a.m. •

"MOONSTRUCK"

Prime time movies

Barbra Streisand stars as a young independent woman who is forced to masquerade as a boy in order to pursue her love of knowledge in "Yentl" on Dec. 23, 9 p.m. on MGM Channel. Amy Irving and Mandy Patinkin co-star.

On Dec. 25 at 9 p.m., "Moonstruck" finds Cher—while waiting for her timid fiancé to decide between her and his mother—falling in love with her fiancé's estranged brother (Nicolas Cage), a bakery worker with a love for opera and a zest for life.

Cher won an Academy Award for her role in this comedy classic, with supporting actress Olympia Dukakis and screenwriter John Patrick Shanley also winning their respective Oscars.

2 OF ASIA'S BEST IN
1 UNFORGETTABLE LOVE STORY

KEN CHU IZA CALZADO

A Film by ADOLFO B. ALIX, JR. and DAVE HUKOM

BATANES

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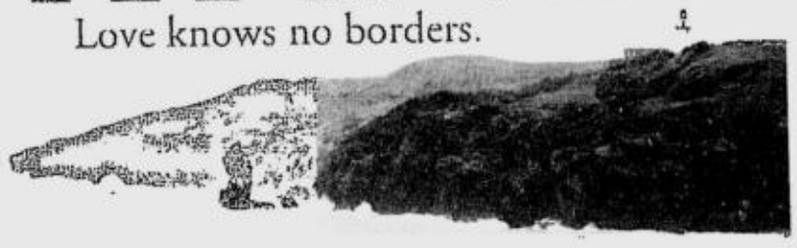


CINEMA TOUR
DEC. 2
SM North Edsa, 3pm
SM Megamall, 7pm

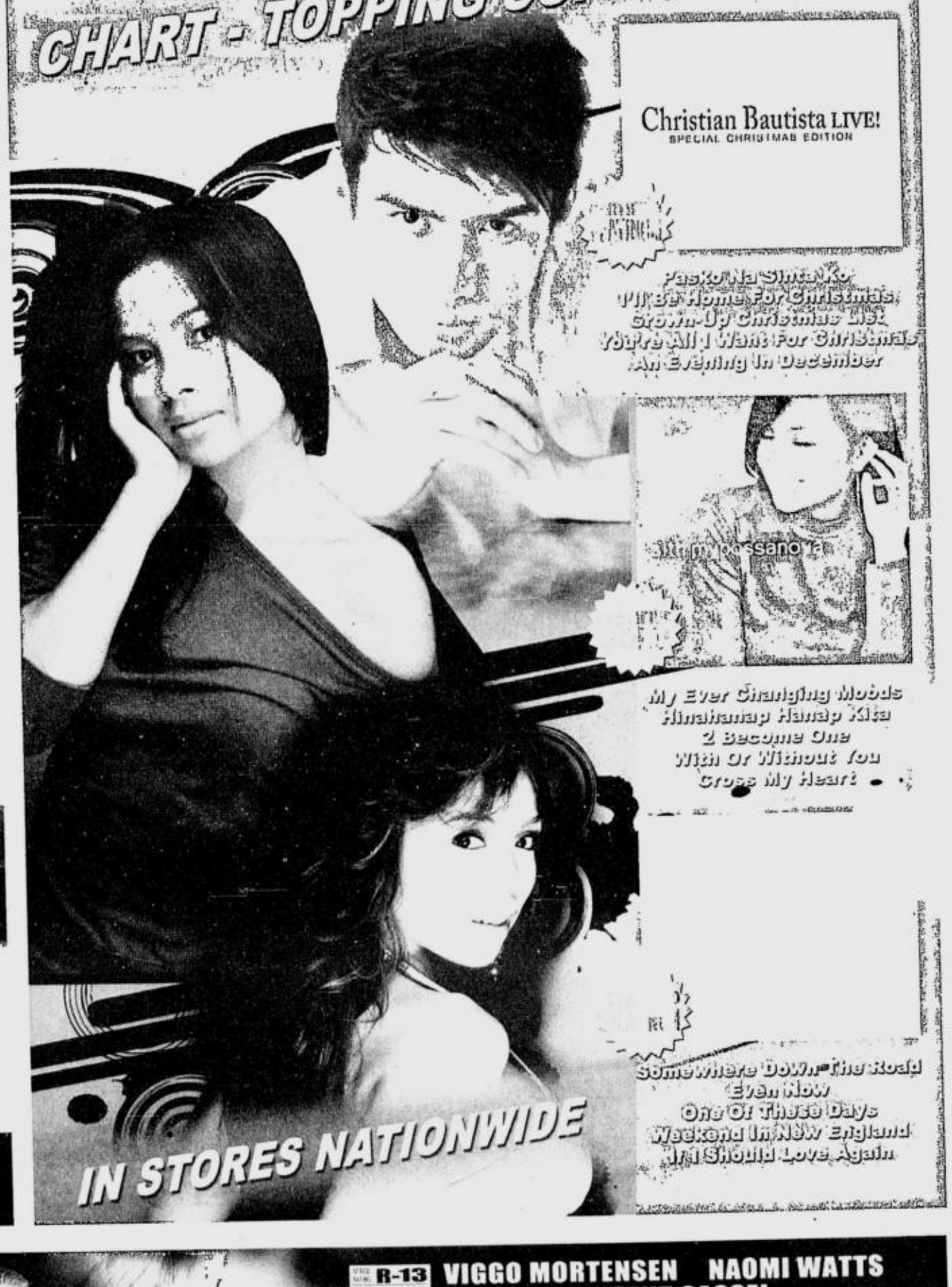
GRAND FANS' DAY
(w/ Autograph Signing)
DEC. 3
Trinoma Activity Center 6pm

PREMIERE NIGHT
DEC. 4
Trinoma
Cinema 7, 8pm

OPENS IN THEATERS DEC.5

WARNER MUSIC PHILIPPINES

CHART - TOPPING SUPERSTARS



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VINCENT CASSEL

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AND DIRECTOR PETER BERG

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SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2007

MI

Home Guaranty Corporation

Office of the President

NOTICE OF SALE

The Home Guaranty Corporation is offering for sale the following properties:

	PROPERTY LOCATION	BLOCK	LOT	TYPE LOT / H&L	LOT AREA	SELLING PRICE	DESCRIPTION
1	Victoria Valley Subdivision, Cainta, Rizal	1	3	Lot only	804	707,520.00	vacant lot
2	Victoria Valley Subdivision, Cainta, Rizal	1	7	Lot only	1,976	1,738,880.00	vacant lot
3	Victoria Valley Subdivision, Antipolo City		20	Lot only	256	281,600.00	irregular lot
4	Victoria Valley Subdivision, Antipolo City		21	Lot only	131	144,100.00	irregular lot
	Total				3,167	2,872,100.00	

INTERESTED PARTIES MAY CALL ASSET MANAGEMENT AND DISPOSITION GROUP AT 897-32-86 OR 897-32-90 OR VISIT THE HEAD OFFICE AT JADE BUILDING, NO. 335 SEN. GIL PUYAT AVENUE, MAKATI CITY.

(Sgd.) **RAFAEL P. DELOS SANTOS**
VICE PRESIDENT
ASSET MANAGEMENT AND
DISPOSITION GROUP

(PDI–Dec. 2 & 8, 2007)

THE CULTURAL CENTER OF THE PHILIPPINES
wishes to announce its

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

for the following contract of services:

Name of Project	Approved Budget for Contract	Start of Purchase of Bid Document	Pre-Bid Conference	Bid Opening	Bid Fee
1. Indoor Janitorial Services for all CCP owned Buildings	P 6,340,392.96	November 29, 2007	December 07, 2007 1:30 PM	December 21, 2007 1:30 PM	P 3,000.00
2. Engineering Maintenance Services for all CCP Buildings	P 6,928,324.92	November 29, 2007	December 07, 2007 3:00 PM	December 21, 2007 3:00 PM	P 3,000.00

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act No. 9184 otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act."

All particulars relative to the eligibility, bid evaluation and award of contracts shall be governed by the provisions of RA 9184.

Interested bidders may obtain further information from the BAC Secretariat (c/o Cecilia E. Funtinilla) and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below and on the dates indicated.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the BAC Secretariat upon payment of a non- refundable bid fee in the amount(s) indicated. The method of payment will be in cash. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

Bids and eligibility requirements must be submitted to the CCP BAC Secretariat on or before the scheduled deadlines. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the form of cash/certified check, cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit or bank guarantee or surety bond based on the agency approved budget for contract. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Bid opening shall be on the dates indicated. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidder's representatives. The award of the projects shall be based on the Lowest Calculated Responsive Bid received from the Bidders.

The CCP reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

BAC Secretariat
Cecilia E. Funtinilla
3/F CCP Tanghalang Pambansa (CCP Main Bldg.)
Roxas Blvd., Pasay City
Tel. Nos. 632-832-3667/632-832-1125 local 1106/1107
Fax No. 632-551-5960
Website: www.culturalcenter.gov.ph

(Sgd.) **ARIEL S.R. YONZON**
BAC Chairman

(PDI - Nov. 25 & Dec. 2, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Finance
INSURANCE COMMISSION
1071 United Nations Avenue
Manila

Head Office
P.O. Box 3589 Manila
FAX No. 522-14-34
Tel. Nos. 523-84-61 to 70
E-mail: oic@i-manila.com.ph

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Notice is hereby given that the following companies previously placed under conservatorship and/or receivership for cause by the Insurance Commission, are now due for liquidation, namely:

Insurance Company	Name & Address of Liquidator
1. **Rico General Insurance Corporation**	**Ms. Teresita P. Gutierrez** 408 A. Evekal Building 855 A. Arnaiz Avenue Makati City
2. **Development Insurance & Surety Co.**	**Atty. John A. Apatan** c/o Insurance Commission 1071 United Nations Avenue Ermita, Manila

Parties having claims against these companies are hereby notified to file their claims under oath not later than six (6) months from the date of the last publication of this notice on December 23, 2007, or until **June 23, 2008**, together with all supporting documents and/or relevant proofs detailing the character, basis and amount of each and every claim, directly with the appointed Liquidator either personally or by mail, for consideration in their eventual liquidation, pursuant to pertinent provisions of the Insurance Code, as amended. **CLAIMS FILED AFTER JUNE 23, 2008 SHALL ONLY BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE REMAINING ASSETS, IF ANY, AFTER SETTLEMENT OF ALL CLAIMS SUBMITTED WITHIN THE SAID DEADLINE.**

EDUARDO T. MALINIS
Insurance Commissioner

(PDI--Dec. 2, 9, 16 & 23, 2007)

ANNOUNCEMENT TO OUR VALUED ADVERTISERS

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525-7381 (Classifieds)

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PRIVATE SECTOR MOBILIZATION FOR FAMILY HEALTH
Implemented by
Chemonics International, Inc.

Request for Submission of Grant Applications

The Private Sector Mobilization for Family Health Project (PRISM) is seeking applications for a grant award intended for

Provision of Technical Assistance to Develop Private Practice Midwives' Facilities into PhilHealth-Accredited Birthing Homes: Expansion Phase

RFA 2007-03-03

PRISM is a project funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under USAID Contract Number 492-C-00-04-00036-00 and implemented by Chemonics International Incorporated.

Grant funding of up to a total amount of PHP 8M will be awarded to qualified grant applicants in accordance with standard USAID policies.

This solicitation is open to Philippine-based and SEC-registered private health organizations or business group or management institution / consortium with extensive experience in providing technical assistance to FP service providers. Knowledge and experience working with the public sector is an advantage. Specific eligibility requirements are indicated in the Request for Applications (RFA) document.

The solicitation document will be released on **Monday, 03 December 2007**. Applicants interested in getting the full details of this solicitation can request for copies of the full RFA document from **grants@prism.org.ph**. Likewise, the RFA can be downloaded in PDF format from **http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/PRISMGrants/**. The closing date for the submission of application is **5:00pm, 27 December 2007**.

Grant Applicants' Conferences will be held at the following PRISM offices: **17 December 2007,** 9am at the PRISM Davao office 7/F Pryce Tower, Pryce Business Park, J.P. Laurel Ave., Davao City; **18 December 2007,** 9am at the PRISM Cebu office Gold Zeal, 2F Cebu Holdings Center, Cebu Business Park, Cardinal Rosales Ave., Cebu City; **21 December 2007,** 9am at the PRISM Manila office 23/F Wynsum Corporate Plaza, F. Ortigas Jr. Road, Ortigas Center, Pasig City.

For further details, please contact Glen de Castro at this e-mail address **gdecastro@prism.org.ph**

(PDI–Dec. 2 & 9, 2007)

FOR IMMEDIATE HIRING

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

- Female, 25 - 35 yrs. old; preferably UP graduate.
- 5 yrs work experience as an Executive Assistant or as an Executive Secretary to a senior corporate officer
- Proficient in written and oral English
- Knowledgeable in computer applications and web research
- Results-oriented, with analytical & administration skills
- Excellent comprehension and listening skills
- Organized and systematic
- Must possess personal and professional integrity
- Willing to work beyond office hours
- Must be committed to the job

SALARY NEGOTIABLE

Email resumé to: **phil.execsearch@gmail.com**

Network/Systems Administrator

- Male, 21-28 years old
- Graduate of BS in Computer Science, Electronics and Communications Engineer, or any Engineering course.
- with at least 2 years experience in systems/network design, implementation and administration.
- 1 year experience in Design and Systems Analysis, SQL, RDMS database administration.
- results, service and detail-oriented, analytical, excellent interpersonal skills, honest, can function well under pressure and can handle multiple tasks.

Sales Clerk / Utility Clerks

- personable, hardworking

Sales Representative

- with strong drive, aggressive, self-starters, team player
- Male/Female, 21 to 26 years old, College graduate
- Pleasing personality, Good communication skills

Send or E-mail application letter and resumé with a recent Passport size picture to:
P.O. BOX 2961 Manila or E-mail: iosmc@yahoo.com

SALES MANAGER

Responsible for over-all development and implementation of sales and operational plans.

- College graduate with MBA degree an advantage, preferably in late 20's or early 30's.
- Must possess excellent skills in account management, negotiation, cost analysis and sales presentation.
- Highly analytical and can communicate effectively at all levels of organization.
- Self-starter and can work with minimum supervision.

PROGRAMMERS

Must be 21 to 30 years old, college graduate with working knowledge in FOXPRO, VISUAL BASIC, and SQL. Those with 1-2 years work experience in systems development using these languages will be preferred.

Please send comprehensive resumé and recent photo to:
P.O. Box 2961, Manila
or e-mail to: **iosmc@yahoo.com.**

DAVAO CITY WATER DISTRICT
J.P. Laurel Ave., Davao City
Tel. # 221-9400

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

1. The Davao City Water District, with the Approved Budget for 2007 intends to apply the sum *(see schedule under 2)* being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under contracts as listed below. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening.
2. The Davao City Water District now invites Bids from ACCREDITED & ELIGIBLE BIDDERS for the following:

PACKAGE	DESCRIPTION	Approved Budget for the Contract	BID SECURITY (1% of ABC)	COST OF BID DOCUMENTS
1	6,550 PCS. – 1/2"Ø WATER METERS	8,122,000.00	P 81,220.00	3,500.00
2	2 UNITS – 250 HP VERTICAL HOLLOWSHAFT MOTOR	1,674,000.00	16,740.00	1,500.00
3	1 UNIT - 150mm. DIA. (6") ELECTROMAGNETIC FULLBORE FLOWMETER	800,000.00	8,000.00	1,000.00
	1 UNIT – 200mm. DIA. (8") ELECTROMAGNETIC FULLBORE FLOWMETER			
4	BLOW-OFF AND FIRE HYDRANT HEADS (RE-BIDDING)	334,125.00	3,341.25	1,000.00

The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from Davao City Water District and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 a.m. up to 5:00 p.m.
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of non-refundable fee in the amount stated in item no. 2. The method of payment will be on Cash Basis. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative. *Deadline for the purchase of bid documents shall be on DECEMBER 13, 2007.*
6. The Davao City Water District will hold a *Pre-Bid Conference* open to all interested parties on *DECEMBER 14, 2007, @ 9:00 A.M. at DCWD BAC-A Secretariat Office, J.P. Laurel Ave., Bajada, Davao City.*
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before *9:00 A.M. on December 27, 2007.* All Bids must be accompanied by a *Bid Security* in the form of Cash or Manager's check in the amount stated in item no. 2. Late Bids shall not be accepted.
8. Bid opening shall be at the *DCWD BAC-A Secretariat Office, J.P. Laurel Ave., Bajada, Davao City* on the following schedule:

PACKAGE No.	BIDDING SCHEDULE, TIME & DATE
1, 2, 3, & 4	DECEMBER 27, 2007 @ 9:00 A.M.

Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.

9. The *Davao City Water District* reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Davao City Water District
BAC A
J.P. Laurel Ave., Bajada, Davao City
Tel. No. : 221-9400 (8000) • E-mail add : dcwd@davao-water.gov.ph
Fax No. : 224-5392 • Website : www.davao-water.gov.ph

(Sgd.) VIRGINIA S. MARIMON
BAC-A Chairperson

(PDI – December 2, 2007)

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•Sikatuna 9210255 / 9220539

TANDANG SORA Townhouse LA75sqm 3BR 3T&B P2M Call 09177207080

LOT

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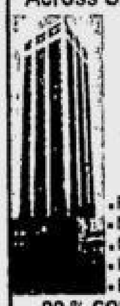

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1% w/out taking car 5315577

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2% w/out taking car 7262780

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PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

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AUCTION SALE

MARA PAWNSHOP I, III, IV AND COMEMBO BR. OF MAKATI CITY AUCTION SALE ON DEC. 11, 2007. TUE AT 10:30, 12:30 AND 1:30 AND 8:30 IN THE MORNING AND ON THE AFTERNOON RESPECTIVELY JUL.13-AUG.11, 2007. SONS OF J.LANUZA AUCTIONEER (PDI-Dec. 2,'07)

MARA PAWNSHOP OF 2230 M. ROXAS ST., STA. ANA MANILA AUCTION SALE ON DEC. 11, 2007 TUE AT 2:30 IN THE AFTERNOON RESPECTIVELY JUL. 13-AUG. 11, 2007. SONS OF J. LANUZA AUCTIONEER(PDI-Dec.2,'07)

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late SUSANNE Y. SANTOS was extrajudicially settled among her heirs as per Doc. No. 64, Page No. 14, Book No. XXI, Series of 2007 under Notary Public Ephraim L. Arcilla of Makati. (Nov.25,Dec.2&9,2007)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late MILA C. ANDAYA was extrajudicially settled among her heirs as per Doc. #212 Page # 43 Book # XXXVI Series of 2007 before Notary Public Atty. Ryan Espinosa of Makati City.(PDI-Nov.18,25&Dec.2,2007)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late NATIVIDAD C. CUEVAS who died on June 9 2007, was extrajudicially settled among her heirs as per Doc 84 Page 18 Book XIII Series of 2007 under Notary Public of Carlito P. Egaña of Makati City (PDI- Dec. 2, 9, 16, 2007)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late ILDEFONSO B. SANTOS JR. was extrajudicially settled among his heirs as per Doc#384 Page#78 Book#554 Series of 2007 before Atty. Lucila M. Lawas-Yutok of Pasig City (PDI-Dec. 2, 9 & 16, 2007)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of late Spouses Generoso del Rosario and Rufina Cacha del Rosario was extrajudicially settled among the heirs as per Doc 829 Page 166 Book X Series 2007 before Notary Public Atty Milagros Raminfrancia of Quezon City. PDI-Nov 25, Dec. 2 & 9, 2007

NOTICE OF LOSS

E-Telecare International, Inc. Stock Cert No. 001691 for 80 shares in the name of JOSE L. CUISIA JR. was lost.If no contest received new cert will be issued.

LOSS STOCK CERT. No.4498 1,056 shares Name: Raymond Silverio and/or Phil. Racing Club, Inc. (PDI-Nov 25, Dec 2 & 9 '07)

Notice is hereby given of the loss of original copy of Certificate of Registration No. 94-288 issued by the Board of Investments on May 27, 1994 to PLDT Co. as stated in the Affidavit executed by June Cheryl Cabal-Furigay on Nov. 22, 2007 and notarized by Florentino D. Mabasa Jr. on Nov. 22, 2007 and recorded as Doc. No. 294; Page 60; Book I, Series of 2007.(PDI-Dec. 2, 2007)

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NEGOSYO PAMASKO CAPITAL 7K EARN 50K/MO. PUREFOODS SAN MIGUEL MAGNOLIA BOSTON C CALL MYRNA 0921-7773323 882-4388

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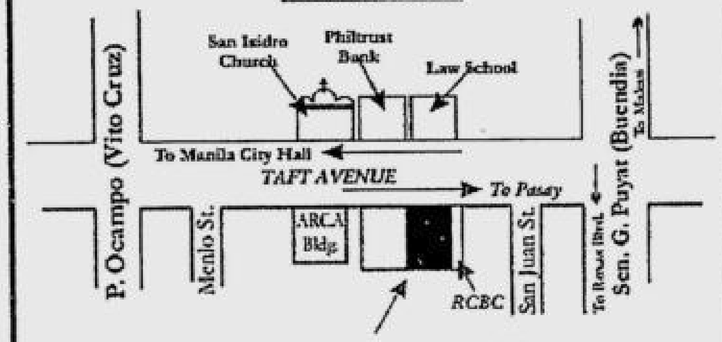
Gift Items for Christmas Holiday!
Dec.3 to 21, 07
Philippine Products Warehouse Sale
LOCATION MAP



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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Notice is hereby given that Mitsubishi Meiki Gasoline Engines with the following model and serial numbers:

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235996 / 236000	235837
236001 / 236002	235838
236006 / 236016	235840
236021 / 236022	235842
236039 / 236042	235845
236043	
GM401PN-RSB	**GM401PN-RSM**
315443 / 315444	237695 / 237696
315451 / 315454	237698 / 237700
315464 / 315465	237705 / 237716
315467 / 315468	237720 / 237721
315470 / 315473	237724 / 237726
315478 / 315480	237735

were lost while in transit from Japan to SEACOM, Inc. office. Any person found in possession of the engines bearing any of the serial number may be held liable for Violation of the Anti-Fencing Law. As such, please inform us at once if you happen to acquire or in possession of any of the said engines. SEACOM, Inc. - 721 Aurora Blvd., New Manila Quezon City. Tel. nos. 722-2140 / 722-2661 Cebu Branch 032-232-4712 Davao Branch 082-221-4201.

(PDI – December 2, 2007)

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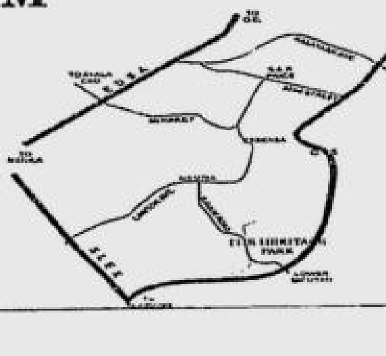
Philippine Mortuary Association
Christmas Party!
at The Heritage Park Fort Bonifacio
Monday, December 3, 2007
@ 4:30 PM
More Raffle Prizes for funeral homes
Come and Join Us...



For details/reservation contact PMA Secretariat
Manila: (02) 892-6061 local 717 (Look For CHRIS)
Cebu: (032) 231-7542 local 19 (Look For HONEY)
: 0927-4676233
Email: pmasecretariat@yahoo.com.ph

We, the Board of Directors, management and employees of
SUBIC BAY METROPOLITAN AUTHORITY and its subsidiary, **FREEPORT SERVICE CORPORATION**

Mourn the passing away of

GEN JOSE MEJIA CALIMLIM (RET)

(NOVEMBER 29, 1945 – NOVEMBER 30,2007)

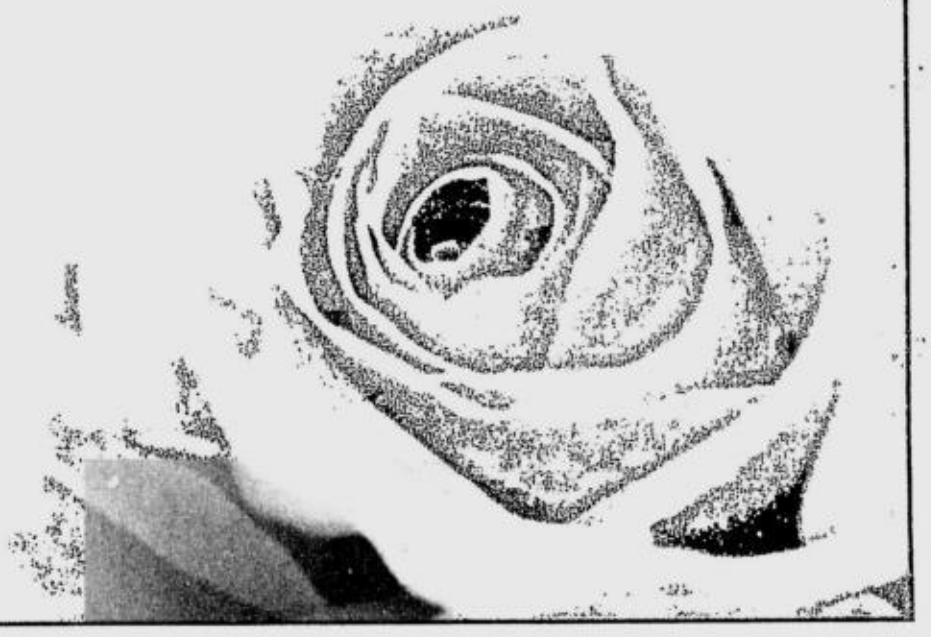
DIRECTOR AND SENIOR DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR FOR OPERATIONS
SUBIC BAY METROPOLITAN AUTHORITY

DIRECTOR AND PRESIDENT
FREEPORT SERVICE CORPORATION
AND
DIRECTOR
TASK FORCE SUBIC

We join his family and friends in their moment of loss and bereavement, and pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the family residence in Villa Arcenia, Mapandan, Pangasinan, and will be brought to the Subic Korean Community Church (beside Subic International Hotel), Subic Bay Freeport, on Monday, December 3, 2007, where necrological services will be held at six o'clock in the evening of Tuesday, December 4.

From Subic, the remains will be brought to the Camp Aguinaldo Mortuary, Quezon City, on Wednesday morning, December 5. Interment will be held on Friday, December 7, at the Libingan ng Mga Bayani.



In Loving Memory
of

FELIZA RUBIO ALVAREZ

On the 10th Anniversary of her Passage to Eternal Life

Holy Masses will be offered for her today at the following Churches:

St. William Cathedral, *San Fernando City, La Union*	5:15 AM
Carmel of St. Therese, *4 Gilmore Ave., Q.C.*	6:00 AM
Christ the King Parish, *Greenmeadows Ave., Q.C.*	6:00 AM
Saint Francis Parish Church, *Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City*	6:00 AM
Mount Carmel Parish, *Doña Juana Rodriguez Ave., New Manila, Q.C.*	6:00 AM
St. John the Baptist Parish, *140 Pinaglabanan St., San Juan, M.M.*	6:00 AM
Roman Catholic of Parañaque, *BF Homes, Parañaque City*	6:00 AM
Sanctuario De San Jose, *Greenhills East, Mandaluyong City*	6:15 AM
Parish of the Resurrection, *E. Gaches St., Phase I, BF Homes, Parañaque City*	6:15 AM
Mary the Queen Parish, *Madison St., San Juan, M.M.*	6:00 AM
Our Lady of Grace Parish, *Grace Park, Caloocan City*	6:00 AM
Sto. Niño Chapel, *JEM 9, Tandang Sora, Quezon City*	8:00 AM
Our Lady of Annunciation Parish, *Mindanao Ave. Ext., Quezon City*	10:00 AM
St. Jude Parish, *Poro, San Fernando City, La Union*	11:00 AM
Sanctuario Del Sto. Cristo, *106 F. Blumentritt St., San Juan, M.M.*	11:00 AM

We request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Ora Pauline (Polly) Bizzell Nestle

January 10, 1923 – November 24, 2007

U.S. Navy Veteran - Teacher - Bridge Player

Served her country as U.S. Navy WAVE during World War II. Spent many years in the Philippines teaching at Sangley Point and Clark AFB. Later became a permanent visitor to the Philippines. Widow of Markalee Howard Nestle, long time resident of the Philippines. She was forever connected to the Philippines because her brother Richard Henry Bizzell was captured at Corregidor, survived the Bataan death march and later died in POW camp here and is memorialized in the American Cemetery. Another brother Ira Daniel Bizzell, Jr. participated in the liberation of the Philippines. She was preceded in death by another brother James Raiford Bizzell, and a sister Georgia Elizabeth Bizzell Palmer who also served in the U.S. Armed Forces during World War II. Survivors are her brothers Lee Caldwell Bizzell and sister-in-law Rose Bizzell of Pace, Mississippi, Frank Marion Bizzell, Dallas, Texas, and sister-in-law Virginia Ferguson Bizzell, Forest Park, Georgia, and many nieces, nephews, and cousins who were the recipients of her generosity and wise counsel. Polly will be missed by friends not only in Manila but from around the world. All those that ever sat in her classroom or at a bridge table with her rejoice in her homegoing. Mass was said for Polly at San Antonio Parish Forbes Park, Makati by Father Ely Santos on Monday, November 26, 2007 at 8 PM.

In Memory of

Jorge Pagara De Castro, Sr.

(April 23, 1942 – November 28, 2007)

A loving father
A devoted husband
A good son and brother
A trusted friend
You will live forever in our hearts.

From
Wife: **Consolacion**
Children: **Joel, Jorge Jr., Ma. Jenniffer and Harry**
Father: **Alejandro**; Mother-in-law: **Paula**
Brothers: **Juanito, Desiderio**; Sisters: **Agustina, Patricia, Rosita**

On **December 2, 2007 (Sunday)**, his remains will stay at **Barrio Ginhawa Chapel (Ginhawa, Tuy, Batangas) from 7AM to 2PM.** A funeral mass will be held on the same day **3PM at Immaculate Conception Parish in Balayan, Batangas.**

Interment at **Gethsemane Memorial Garden (Balayan, Batangas)** will follow.

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:

1. Copy of Death Certificate
2. Any identification document (I.D.)

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Message of Thanks

No amount of words or tears can express the pain and the sorrow we feel at his passing away. Through your prayers, condolences, and company, you gave us strength and relief to walk through these difficult moments.

We, the family of the late

Alejandro del Mundo

July 16, 1939 to November 21, 2007

wish to convey our deepest gratitude to all of you – our relatives, friends, and colleagues who spent precious time with us, sent flowers, mass cards, gave donations or in some other way expressed your love, concern, and support with the loss of our dearest father.

"Lord, you will show me in the path of life and fill me with joy in your presence."
Ps. 16:11

Notify family and friends of a loved one who had just passed away.

We accept death notices, announcing details of the person's wake and interment. For a very affordable fee you can reach out to everyone who have been a part of the life of your dearly departed.

For more information, you may contact Inquirer Classifieds at (02) 897-8425.

Message of Thanks

WE, THE FAMILY OF THE LATE

LUZVISMIND VILLANUEVA DIZON

of Candaba, Pampanga and Angeles City

(SEPT. 8, 1932 – NOV. 15, 2007)

Wish to convey our deepest gratitude to all of you – our relatives, friends, and colleagues who spent precious time with us, sent flowers, mass cards, gave donations, or in some way expressed your love, concern, and sorrow with the loss of our beloved mother.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life." John 3:16

...I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race,
I have kept the faith.

2 Timothy 4:7

GEN. JOSE M. CALIMLIM (Ret.)

PMA CLASS '68

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord on November 30, 2007 at the age of 62.

He is survived by his loving wife **Cristina**; children **Jose Ferdinand** & **Jeaniffer**, **Arlene** & **Glen**, **Samuel David** & **Bernadette** and **Christine**; grandchildren **Andreana Sofia**, **Gabriella Marguerite**, **Hanna Sofia**, **Joshua** and **Samuel David, Jr.**

His remains will lie in state at the following:

Camp Aguinaldo Mortuary	November 30
Villa Arsenia, Poblacion, Mapandan, Pangasinan	December 1 & 2
Korean Christian Church, Subic Bay Freeport	December 3 & 4
Camp Aguinaldo Mortuary	December 5 & 6

Necrological services will be held at Camp Aguinaldo on Thursday, December 6, 2007 at 7:00 p.m.

Interment will be at 12:00 noon on Friday, December 7, 2007 at the Libingan ng mga Bayani.

... and you will receive a rich welcome into
the eternal kingdom of our Lord
and Savior Jesus Christ.
– 2PE 1:11

ENGR. JUANITO V. EDUARTE

March 8, 1931 – November 30, 2007
(Retired Regional Director of DPWH)

His loving wife **Corazon**; children **Arlyn** & **Jimmy**, **Evelyn** & **Boboy**, **Marlyn** & **Alvin**, **Lady** & **Orly**, **Nonoy** & **Joy**, **Gil** & **Marive**, **Francie**, **Jun**, **Freya** & **Philippe**; grandchildren **Jackie**, **James**, **Michelle**, **Joseph**, **Jay-ar**, **Mico**, **Marvin**, **Charlene**, **Maxine**, **Chelsea**, **Karl**, **John**, **Zyleen**, **Limuel**, **Josh**, **Jasam**, **Kendric**, **Evvia**, nephews & nieces and relatives & friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Superior Chapel, La Funeraria Paz, Inc., Araneta Avenue, Q.C.

Interment will follow after the 9:00 a.m. Mass on December 8, 2007.

"I am the resurrection and the life.
He who believes in Me will live,
even though he dies and
whoever believes in Me
will never die."
- John 11:25-26

LOURDES REYES YAP

of Legaspi City, Albay

peacefully joined our Lord
on November 30, 2007 at the age of 80.

Her loving husband, **Santos Yap** (†); children **Jose**, **Pio**, **Greg**, **Lorna**, **Sylvia**, **Mike**, **Leila**, **Sandy**, **Dionisio**, **Anthony**, **Lutos**; grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at No. 63 Velasco Street, Doña Maria Subdivision, Daraga, Albay.

Interment will be on Thursday, December 6, 2007 at the Pristine Memorial Gardens, Legaspi City.

Death Notices

GERARDO (TOTI) VERDER

Toti departed this life to join his Creator on November 27, 2007.

The Funeral Mass will be celebrated today, December 2 at 9 AM, at Funeraria Paz in Sucat. Thereafter, interment will take place at Loyola Memorial Park in Marikina after a military ceremony at noon.

MARY "AYA" R. SIERRA

October 22, 1918 – November 30, 2007

Peacefully joined our Lord at the age of 89.

Her remains lie in state at Chapel Venice, Loyola Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City. Interment will take place today, December 2, 2007 at the Manila North Cemetery after the 9:00 a.m. mass.

(RET.) JUDGE FELICISIMO REYES CABIGAO

December 19, 1928 – November 30, 2007

Retired RTC Judge - NCR Branch 173
Vice-Mayor City of Manila — 1967 - 1971
Re-elected Councilor City of Manila — 1963 - 1967
Elected Councilor City of Manila — 1959 - 1963

Died in the grace of the Lord at the age of 77 years old

His bereaved wife, **ADELAIDA,** children **JOJI, CECIL, SUSAN, RENETTE, JEFF,** grandchildren **JON, KRISA, KETCH ALI,** brother **WILLIE** & **CELY,** sister **EDENG** & **TONY,** in-law **MINIANG** & **RONNIE,** nephews and nieces and other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, Inc., # 12-G Araneta Ave., Quezon City.

Interment will be on Thursday, December 6, 2007 at Loyola Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque. A Requiem Mass will be celebrated at Arlington at 8:00 a.m.

CLASSIFIEDS

Passing staged at the CCP

ON DEC. 4, 6 P.M. AT THE CCP'S MAIN THEATER Lobby, theater lovers will be treated to Passing, a very special production. Noted Fil-Am playwright May Nazareno travels back to the Manila of 1939 and keeps racing towards New York thirty years later to discover the secret of star-crossed lovers in Passing, a play about love and war. A fading beauty queen, a daughter who longs to talk to ghosts, young men escaping the horrors of war and discovering love in the most unlikely places— all these characters will rivet the audience to their seats as an unlikely love story unfold. Featured in the play are Mayen Estañero, Wenah Nagales, Sugus Legaspi and Russel Legaspi, all artists of Tanghalang Pilipino, the CCP's resident theater company.

Passing is part of Cultural Center of the Philippines' Waiting in the Wings Series, a program where new works and works in progress are featured. After the show, the viewers get the rare opportunity of interacting with artists. Everyone is encouraged to ask questions and share their opinions.

May Nazareno is an acclaimed playwright, actor and producer. Her first play Dead Woman Home premiered in Seattle where it received critical acclaim and was later featured in the Philippines at the 3rd National Theater Festival in 2004. Ms. Nazareno is the founder and guiding light of The Pamana Theater Project, a theater organization that seeks to develop new works that explore the differences between Asian cultures in the hope that an understanding of these differences can lead to "honoring boundaries and discovering parallels, which can illuminate the unseen and make a lasting impact in the communities we serve."

Tickets to Passing are Free. For inquiries or reservations, call Ms. Nikki Garde-Torres at 832-2314 or 832-1125 local 1607.

NREA backs 1st Asian International Realty expo

ADVOCATING A GLOBAL STATUS FOR LOCAL realty firms and professionals, the National Real Estate Association, Inc. (NREA), the one-stop trade organization, has expressed support to the holding on Dec. 6-10, of the 1st Asian International Real Estate Expo and Conference (AIREEC).

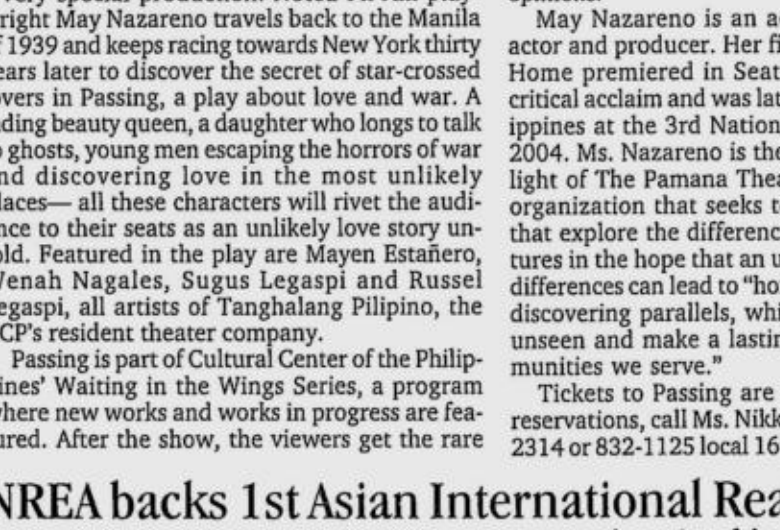
Marketing guru Alejandro S. Mañalac, NREA national president, said that the holding of AIREEC at the Philippine International Convention Center, Pasay City will enhance the global status and prestige of the country's realty firms, products and services.

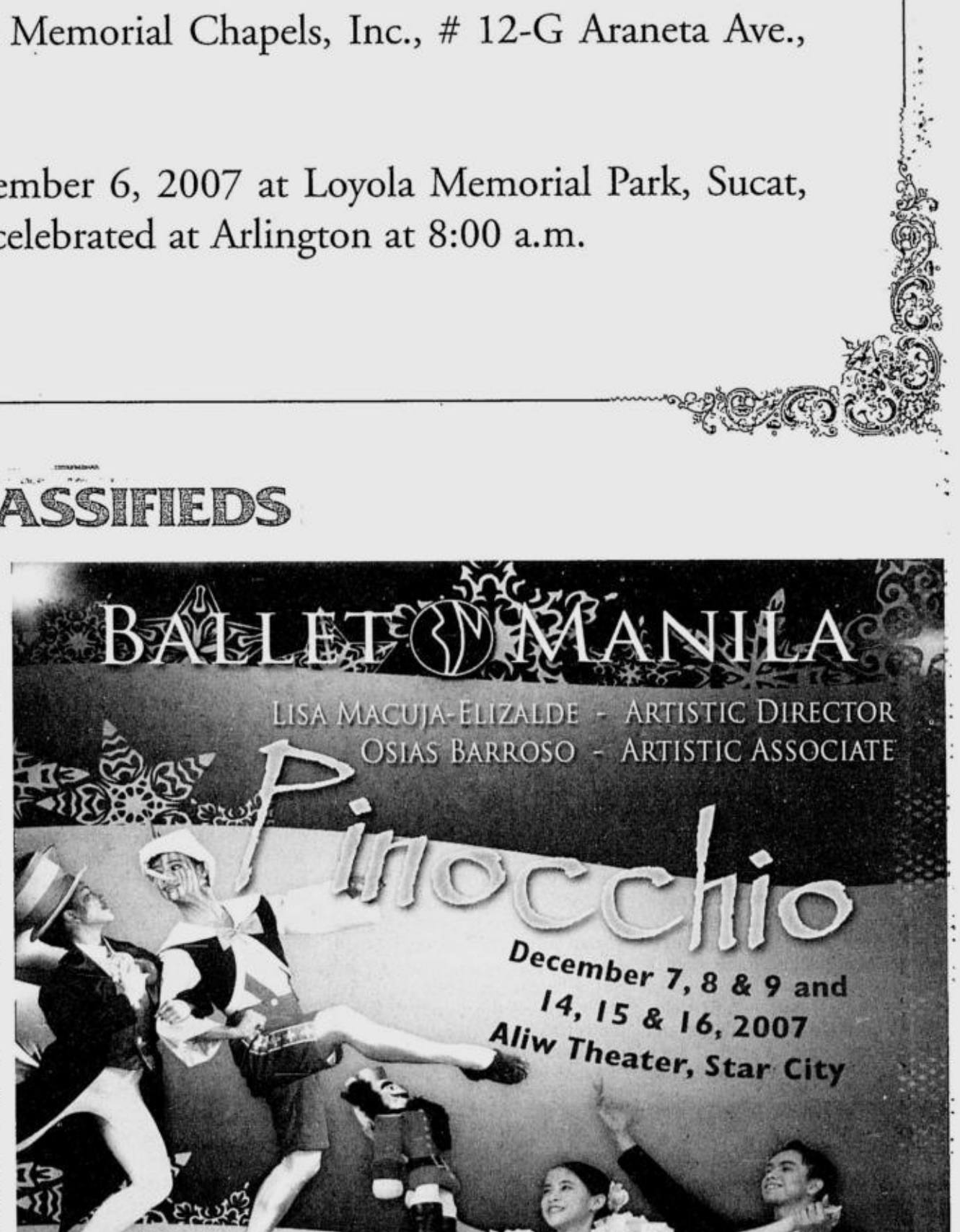
Focused on the theme, "West Meets East Meets West," the event is supported by the Department of Tourism and Department of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines.

It is also backed by the U.S. Dept. of Commerce, and the National Association of Realtors with 3.5 million members in 55 countries, and by other worldwide trade and professional organizations.

NREA THANKSGIVING NIGHT

Guest of honor and speaker Congressman Jose G. Solis (3rd from right) pose with officials of the National Real Estate Association (NREA) during the recent NREA Thanksgiving Dinner at the Makati Sports Club in Makati City. Shown are from left: Affair chair Joey Angeles, Chair Ka Pepe Manalad, Dep. P.R.O. Jesse Rebustillo, Architect Ric Pobiete, Vice Chair Jun Palafox, President Andy Mañalac, Solis, also a NREA past president; Rear Adm. Ramon C. Liwag (PCG), a special guest; and Exec. Vice President Gilda Lim. Meanwhile, NREA will hold its traditional Christmas affair on Dec. 11, 6 p.m. with Sen. Juan Miguel Zubiri as special guest also at the Makati Sports Club.





PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2007

People, Events & Products

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Editor Aries Espinosa

Meralco to recognize best-lit houses, streets

THE MANILA ELECTRIC COMPAny (Meralco) announced that it is now accepting nominations for its "Máliwanag ang Pasko" Christmas campaign. Meralco vice president and corporate communication head Elpi Cuna said, "'Maliwanag ang Pasko' is an annual campaign of Meralco that aims to enliven the age-old Filipino tradition of lighting up during the holidays, as the company expresses its oneness with the nation as it celebrates the birth of the one true light, Jesus Christ."

Through this campaign, Meralco is giving recognition and cash prizes to the most creatively designed and brightly lit houses, streets and churches all over its franchise area during the Christmas season. Nine houses, 9 streets and 9 churches will be hailed as winners for lighting up and sharing the joy and spirit of Christmas in their neighborhoods and communities. The three categories are respectively dubbed as "Maliwanag ang Pasko sa Tahanan," "Maliwanag ang Pasko sa Daan" and "Maliwanag ang Pasko sa Simbahan."

On the side, Cuna also invites families to come and see the company's own display of lights at the Meralco Center. "We also would like to invite everyone to visit Meralco's head office on Ortigas Avenue, Pasig City to see the brightly lit compound at night. On display, too, and beautifully illuminated in the evening are a giant version of the belen, figures of the wise men in search of the infant Jesus and a replica of a community dubbed as "Barangay Pasko sa Meralco". It consists of a church, school building, houses and replica of a family strolling along the plaza. Gates are open to the public from 5:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. everyday.

"Be surprised to see, too, that these figures were made of recycled copper and aluminum wires. We hope that witnessing this spectacle would be a delightful and memorable experience for Filipino families, especially the children."

The central theme for the "Maliwanag ang Pasko" campaign starting this year is the charity or sharing component. This is because the company wants to emphasize and bring back the important values of giving and sharing during Christmas. Because of this, for the "Maliwanag ang Pasko sa Tahanan" category, Meralco will be matching the prize winnings of the 9 winners and will donate this amount on behalf of the winners to a partner charitable institution.

Nomination period is up until 12 noon of Dec. 8. Nomination forms are available in all Meralco branches, and can also be downloaded from and submitted through the official "Maliwanag ang Pasko" website www.maliwanagangpasko.com. Interested parties may visit the website for full contest details and mechanics.

After all the candidates have been shortlisted, their pictures will be uploaded and made available in the website on Dec. 15. The public will then be allowed to vote for their favorite entries via SMS or "text messaging". All text voters will be included in an electronic raffle that will be held on Jan. 3, 2008, where five winners will be picked.

Cuna said, "As Meralco is associated with the role of 'tagapagdala ng liwanag,' we also would like to reinforce through the 'Maliwanag ang Pasko' campaign Meralco's partnership with its customers in providing light, comfort and convenience, not only in their homes, but in their churches and streets as well, especially during this time of the year."

CLUSIVOL POWER C DONATES TO GAWAD KALINGA

Wyeth Consumer Healthcare, through its brand Clusivol Power C, donated vitamin C supplements to Gawad Kalinga as part of the company's 'Power Proteksyon' project. Part of its commitment of caring for the health of Filipinos, the project aims to contribute in making the lives of the less fortunate become healthier by providing millions worth of Clusivol Power C to different foundations and non-profit organizations. Gawad Kalinga is a Philippine-based movement that envisions building 700,000 homes in 7,000 communities in seven years through its GK 777 campaign with 2010 as the target date for delivery. Together with its partners, GK is in the process of transforming poverty-stricken areas, thus empowering the citizens to strive for an improved quality of life. Through GK's health program Gawad Kalusugan, primary healthcare is implemented among the GK communities. GK received P2 million worth of Clusivol Power C 60-ml bottles. The donation will augment Gawad Kalusugan's ongoing health programs and medical missions. Shown, from left, are Dr. Ma. Teresa Oquinena, former director for health, GK, Dr. Erik Cayabyab, current director for health, GK, Dr. Jose Yamamoto, CFC council member, Edwin Kuizon, marketing director, Wyeth Consumer Healthcare, Liza Glodoviza, finance director, Wyeth Consumer Healthcare, and Cyril Urbano, product manager, Wyeth Consumer Healthcare.

Icle 3 at Manila Hotel Dec. 4

FROM DEC. 4 TO 6, THE PHILIPPINE ASsociation for Language Teaching Inc (PALT) will hold its 3rd International Conference on Language Education (Icle 3) at The Manila Hotel. PALT is the official country affiliate of the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (Tesol) and the Pan-Asian Consortium of Language Teaching Societies (PAC).

This bilingual conference endorsed by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the Department of Education (DepEd) bears the theme "The Seven Spheres of Language Teaching: From Tradition to Innovation". Over 100 international paper presentations, workshops, and demonstrations shall be highlighted in this event. The first Asian president of Tesol, Dr. Jun Liu of the University of Arizona will give the keynote. The other plenary speakers include: Dr. MaryAnn Christison and Dr. Adrian Palmer of the University of Utah, Dr. Rosario E. Maminta and Mikaela Irene Fudolig of the University of the Philippines, Dr. David Marsh of the University of Jyvaskyla in Finland, Dr. Teh Chee Seng of the Universiti Tunkul Abdul Rahman in Malaysia, professor Sothida Keyuravong of King Mongkut University of Technology in Thailand, and Dr. Bonny Norton of the University of British Columbia in Canada.

Language teachers, contact center specialists and owners, academic publishers, language curriculum developers and researchers, and undergraduate students are invited to attend this rare international academic engagement. A conference fee of P6,500 payable onsite will be charged to cover conference materials and meals. Undergraduate students will only pay P1,500 per day. For more information, log on to the official conference website at www.palt-elt.org. Text or call Edizon Angeles Fermin at 0917-8161204.

LE CLUB FCC HOLDS 14TH FRENCH WINE FESTIVAL

The Le Club French Chamber of Commerce in the Philippines recently held the 14th Soirée Beaujolais French wine festival at the Harbor Garden Tent of the Sofitel Philippine Plaza Manila. The fest is the biggest social event of the French community in Manila which celebrates the harvest of the young red wine called Beaujolais Nouveau. Some P800,000 worth of fabulous prizes were given away, including two Manila-Paris Air France-KLM round-trip business class tickets. Part of the proceeds of the event will go to Le Club's scholarship fund. Offering a toast to welcome the 2007 vintage of Beaujolais Nouveau are Le Club officers (from left) Henri Ortiz, administrator; Philippe Gauthier, charter president; Jean d'Orival, vice president; Bernard Flour, president; Sofitel hotel general manager Berndt Schneider, and Stephane Khaled, Le Club business development manager.

UE's Candelaria attends Asaihl conference Dec. 5

UNIVERSITY OF THE EAST INTERNAtional Student Office (UE ISO) adviser and concurrent UE College of Arts and Sciences (UE CAS) professor Mercy L. Candelaria will present a paper on "Internationalization of Higher Education: The Philippines' Response to Globalization" at the Association of Southeast Asian Institutions of Higher Learning (Asaihl) Conference from Dec. 5 to 7 at Curtin University of Technology, Perth, Western Australia. The conference's theme is "Leadership for Globalization in Higher Education: Lessons and Opportunities".

CANDELARIA

The Asaihl-Philippine Council Country Paper Selection Committee chose Candelaria's paper as the Philippines' country paper for presentation at the Asaihl Conference's plenary. She will speak for the Philippines as well as the UE as a member university.

Aside from being a UE ISO adviser and a long-time UE CAS Manila English faculty, Candelaria also serves as president of both the UE CAS Alumni Association (UECasaa) and the CAS Scholarship Foundation, and as UE Alumni Association Inc (UEAAI) treasurer. She used to be chair of the CAS Communication Arts Department-Manila and the University Committee on Socio-Cultural Activities, now known as the Office of Cultural Affairs.

Warm, sweet treats from Tupperware

CHRISTMAS IS THE TIME OF year when nights are cold and endless feasts abound. It's also the perfect time to enjoy hot, favorite beverages such as hot chocolate, coffee and tea to keep you warm and comfy during cold Christmas nights.

This year, Tupperware, the makers of high-quality food storage containers, presents the perfect way to enjoy these soothing treats with their Midi Treasure Saver and Fiesta Cup and Saucer Set. Each item comes with free sweet and healthy beverages Antonio Pueo Spanish-style Chocolate Tablets or a box of Premium Mint Tea.

Enjoy your hot cocoa, coffee or tea in style with the Fiesta Cup and Saucer Set. This colorful set of cup and saucer come in a classy contemporary design. With every set of Fiesta Cup and Saucer, you get a free Antonio Pueo Spanish-style Chocolate Tablets-traditional chocolate tablets made from locally grown cacao beans.

Cacao is known to have antioxidants that help protect against heart diseases. It can help prevent fat-like substances in the bloodstream to oxidize and form plaque that blocks arteries.

The Midi Treasure Saver, on the other hand, is a flat and slim container that makes a space-efficient storage solution. It's virtually airtight, locking in the freshness of cookies, pretzels, bread sticks, coffee sachets and tea bags.

And to keep you from feeling bloated this season of non-stop eating and partying, for every purchase of a Midi Treasure Saver, Tupperware gives a Premium Mint Tea.

Known as a great tonic for digestive health, the Premium Mint Tea is a tummy-soothing tea that has been proven to ease upset stomach for ages. Just drink a cup a few minutes before a meal, and you're ready for the feast.

So this Christmas, keep yourself warm with these well-loved beverages with Tupperware.

7-Eleven marks 25th year with 300th store in RP

PHILIPPINE SEVEN CORP (PSC), OPERAtor of the fastest-growing franchise network of convenience stores in the Philippines, marks another milestone on the eve of its 25 years of successful business with the opening of its 300th 7-Eleven store.

The licensor of the world-renowned convenience store brand announced the launching of the new store as further proof of its steadily growing business and the unwavering patronage of the buying public in its products and services.

"We have seen over the years the growing trust of Filipino entrepreneurs in the success of the 7-Eleven franchising system. We have shown them that they are valued partners and that their success is also our success," said Jose Victor Paterno, PSC president.

Paterno noted that the new store marked another milestone in the growing list of achievements being garnered by the company, who only last year was named the Franchise Excellence Awardee for 2006.

"Perhaps the most telling factor in our continued success is our 25 years of experience in the business, as well as the initiative that PSC has shown in coming up with new franchise offerings, new products and new support systems that will help our franchisees grow," said Paterno.

Aside from the 300th store, PSC also marked the 25th anniversary celebration with the ceremonial signing of the area license agreement with Seven Eleven International (SEI), which extends its license for 7-Eleven in the country; the continued nursing of their one hectare lot at La Mesa Ecopark, an eco-awareness project with ABS-CBN; the establishment of a new foundation to spearhead the country's CSR efforts; and a party-concert bash for all its partners, suppliers, franchisees and loyal patrons.

Among the other areas still available for franchising include La Union, Baguio, Olongapo, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, Bulacan, Laguna, Batangas, Quezon and Cavite.

For inquiries, call 726 9968 or (0920) 950-8651, or log on to www.7-eleven.com.ph.

Bayer Ascensia Glucometers Christmas offer for limited stocks

SAY MERRY CHRISTMAS WITH A GIFT THAT SHOWS HOW MUCH you care for your family, relative or friend who has diabetes: Bayer Ascensia Glucometers-now at a really low, low price. Doctors trust and prefer Bayer Ascensia Glucometers because of its state-of-the-art bi-sensor technology that provide an accurate glucose level reading results comparable to laboratory plasma method used in many diagnostic clinics-in just 30 seconds. Bayer Ascensia Elite and Entust Glucometers offer a more reliable, systematic and convenient way of accurately checking one's blood sugar level-at work, or in the comfort of one's home-practically anywhere and anytime of the day. Available in two types: Elite and Entrust, both glucometers are from Bayer, the leader in diabetic care research and management for over 60 years and exclusively distributed by FMEI Diamonde Solutions Inc (414-7775). Elite Glucometer, the no-fuss, no-mess, no-buttons-to-push, automatically turns on when the test strip is inserted and uses capillary gap technology which requires only 2uL of blood so there's absolutely no need to squeeze the finger just to get a drop of blood. Entrust Glucometer has a straightforward set up and finger-friendly coded test strip that fits easily into the meter and has a large holding area for better strip handling. The LCD window displays information to guide user on how to get test results, retrieve memory of previous results (patients can easily review up to 10 tests with its convenient meter memory). Handy, lightweight and portable, both Bayer Ascensia Elite and Entrust have replaceable batteries and are also available in all Mercury Drugstores nationwide. This Yuletide Season, give the gift that will help someone manage their diabetes better.

Buguey Circle Metro Manila 75th year

THE BUGUEY CIRCLE METRO MANILA INC WILL BE HOLDING its 75th founding anniversary on Dec. 8, 7 p.m. at Celebrity Sports Plaza Inc, Capitol Hills Drive, Diliman, Quezon City. Ignacio Taruc, Mayor of Buguey, Cagayan Valley, will be the guest of honor. All Bugueyanos are invited to take part in this big event. For more information, call Aida F. Villamin at 542-2658 and engineer Rogelio Urbina at 411-5983 or 373-9348.

Sunday LIFESTYLE

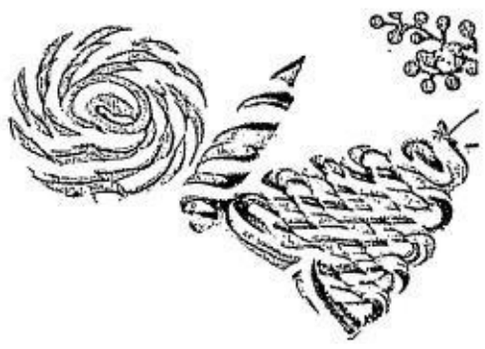
Kiddie Fun

Kids are definitely in a whirl this Christmas - making wish lists for Santa, shopping with Mom and Dad, playing kris kringle at school, and spending fun times at the mall and at the carnival. Christmas, after all, is for kids, and they're certainly on a holiday roll with great holiday kidstuff from SM.

They'll be the star of any Christmas party with clothes from SM's Children's and Infants Wear Departments - make it a date with Mickey at Toy Kingdom, enjoy the stocking stuffers from Snack Exchange, and play Santa with great wrap-ups from the Stationery and Supplies Department. Here's a guide for all great stuff for kids from SM.

CARNIVAL FUN. Festive red and white dress with a ruffled hemline amidst Global Carnival's carousel ride.

BASKET OF LOVE. This basket includes a cuddly bear, Doritos, Calbee Seaweed flavor potato chips, Dubble Bubble Gum Balls and Mini Candy Canes.

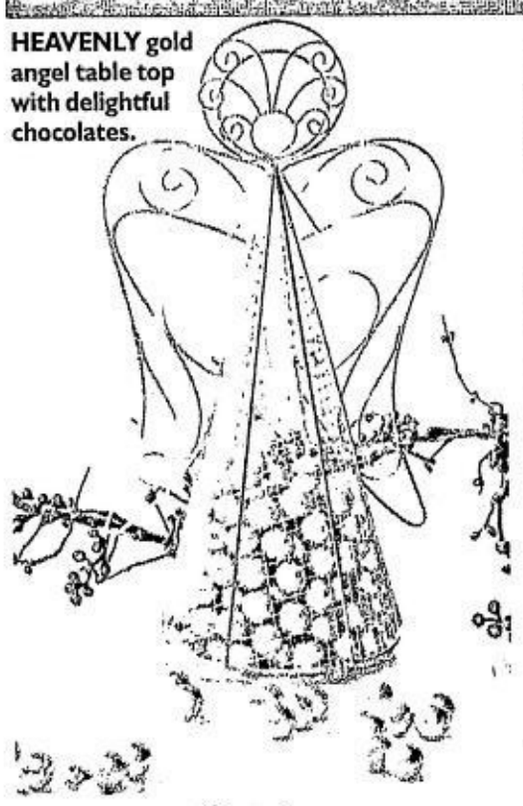


SWEET STICKS. Candy cane striped lollipops in holiday pine, swirl and twirl playful shapes.

Sweet Sensations

CHOCO LOCO. Orion gift basket includes 4 boxes of Choco-Pie with marshmallow cream and a cute teddy bear.

HEAVENLY gold angel table top with delightful chocolates.



NOTHING says Merry Christmas as sweetly as delightful confectionery gifts or baskets loaded with holiday treats.

SM brings in the merriment with melt-in-your mouth gold chocolate coins packaged in beautifully sculpted angel and Christmas tree tabletops, all in opulent gold. Old-fashioned candy cane pieces are gracefully sculptured in playful pine, swirl, and twirl shapes - perfect for tree ornaments or stocking stuffers.

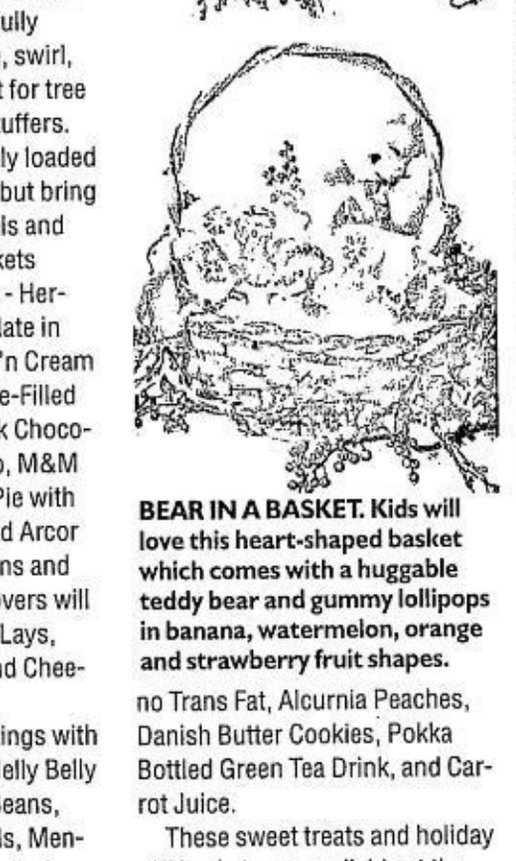
Gift baskets are not only loaded with treats for everyone, but bring holiday tidings with angels and gift bears. There are baskets packed with sweet treats - Hershey's Chewy Choooocolate in Strawberry and Cookies 'n Cream flavors, Samba Chocolate-Filled Bonbons, Rocklets Crock Chocolates, Cofler Blanc Choco, M&M candies, Orion's Choco Pie with Marshmallow Cream, and Arcor Butter Toffees with Raisins and Milk Chocolate. Snack lovers will love those with Doritos, Lays, Ruffles, Cheese Balls, and Cheetos Balls.

Stuff Christmas stockings with Trolli Gummy Candies, Jelly Belly Original Gourmet Jelly Beans, Dubble Bubble Gum Balls, Mentos Candies, and Gummy Lollipops in banana, watermelon, orange, and strawberry fruity shapes.

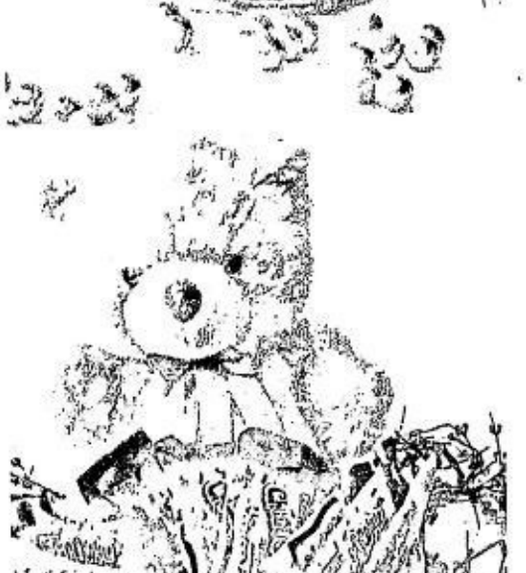
Other gift baskets are perfect for entertaining with Dak's Chopped Ham, Colavita Renne Rigante Pasta, and Hunts Meat Spaghetti Sauce. Give gifts of good health with baskets loaded with wise choices like Quaker Oatmeal, Welch's Fat Free Strawberry Fruit Snacks, Loaker Wafer with no Trans Fat, Alcurnia Peaches, Danish Butter Cookies, Pokka Bottled Green Tea Drink, and Carrot Juice.

These sweet treats and holiday gift baskets are available at the Snack Exchange Department of all SM stores.

BEAR IN A BASKET. Kids will love this heart-shaped basket which comes with a huggable teddy bear and gummy lollipops in banana, watermelon, orange and strawberry fruit shapes.

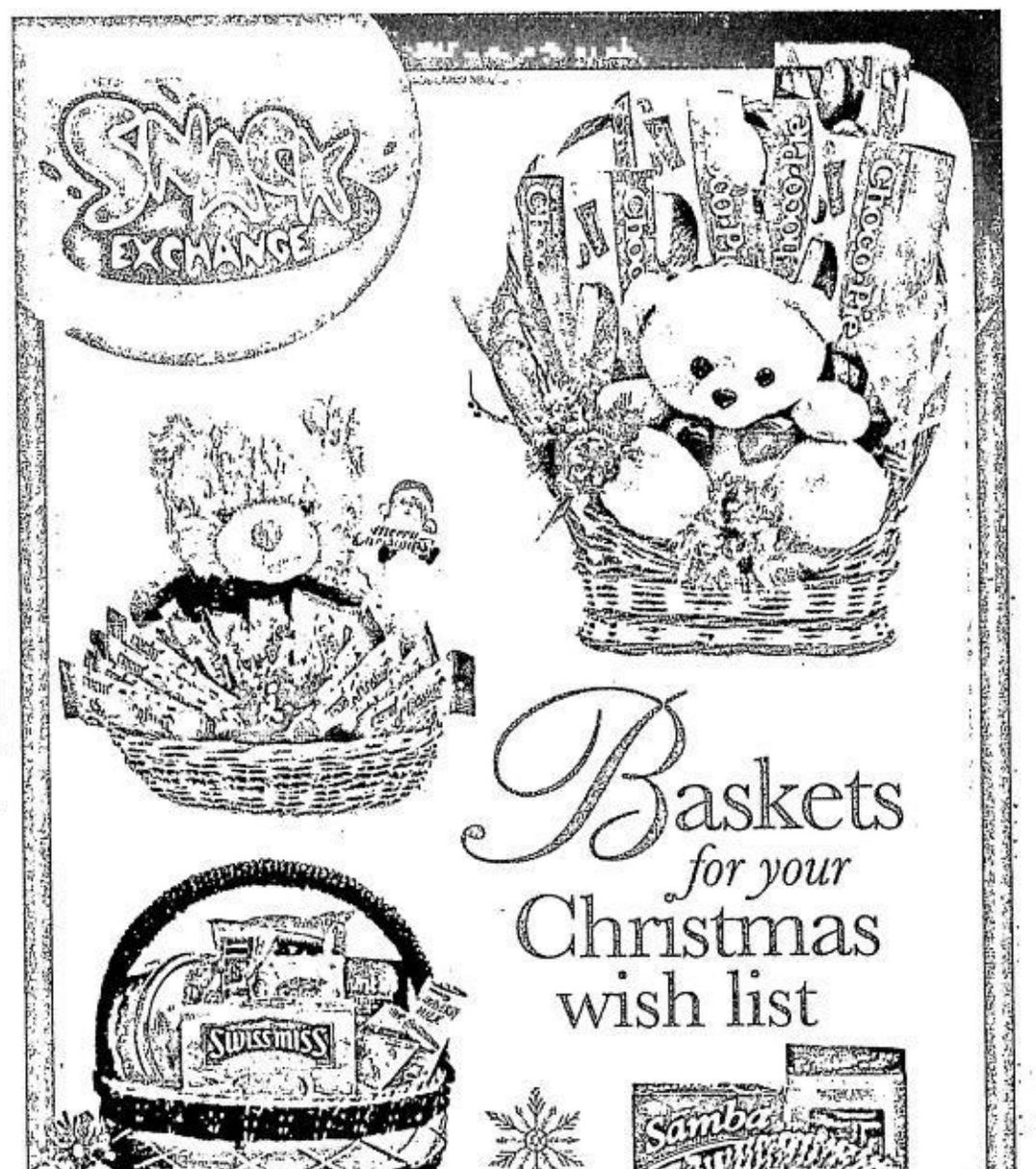


GIFT OF GOLD. Gold tree-shaped table top with gold chocolate coins.



HAVE A BEARY CHRISTMAS. Hershey's gift basket with chewy Choooocolate in Strawberry and Cookies 'n Crème flavors and cuddly bear.

TINY TREATS. Jelly Belly tin can with original gourmet jelly beans, and a cuddly bear.



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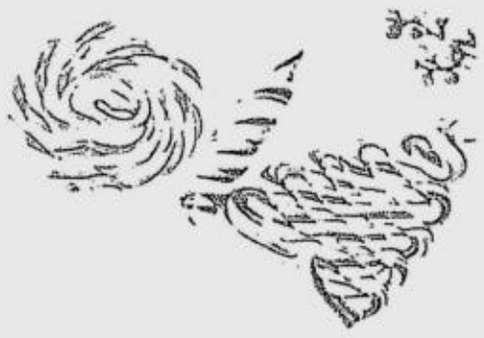

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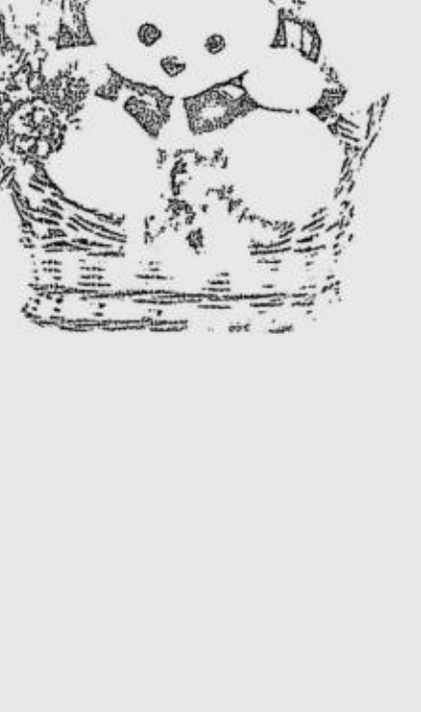


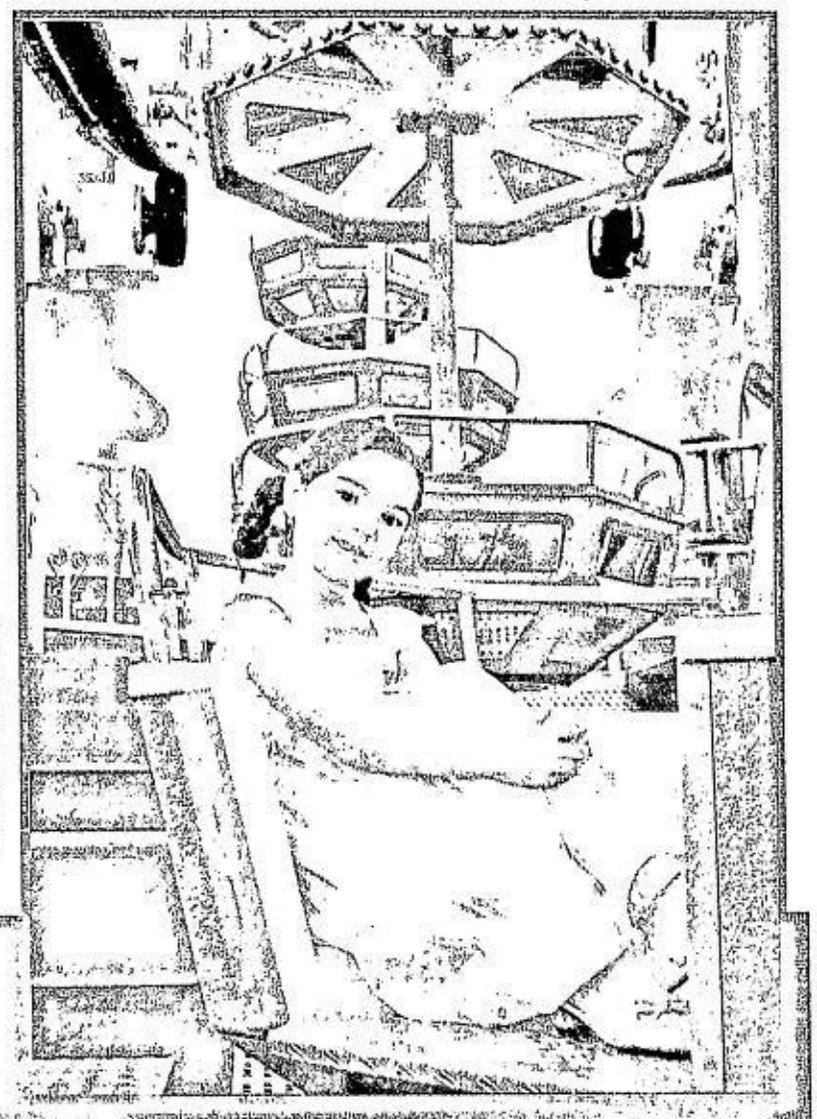
We've got it all for you! SM DEPARTMENT STORE

RETAKE OF PRECEDING FRAME

CAPTURE the spirit of Christmas in this white sleeveless eyelet dress with a red checkered skirt and decorative belt.

PRETTY IN PINK. Pink floral printed trapeze dress worn with pink leggings.

AVAILABLE AT THE SM DEPARTMENT STORE
PHOTOGRAPHY: ERWIN BARLETA
LOCATION: GLOBAL CARNIVAL



PRINCESS TREATMENT. Sit like a princess in Global Carnival's Ferris wheel ride in this pastel striped and polka dotted dress.

Girl talk

With most Christmas activities centering on kids, it's the best time for little girls to dress the holiday part in the prettiest of clothes in SM.

Photographed at the dazzling Global Carnival at the SM Mall of Asia, here are a multitude of ways girls can shine at any holiday activity - nostalgic rides like the Carousel and the Ferris Wheel serve as the perfect backdrop for dainty dresses with floral, bow, and ruffle accents. There are also dream dresses for pretty princesses like the pink polka dotted outfit photographed near the Pirates' Ship, and trendy tunics and trapeze tops that are perfect for trying out daring new rides like the Swinger and the Flipper.

Check out these fun and fashionable outfits at the Children's Wear Department of all SM stores.

TRUE BLUE. Aqua blue eyelet trapeze dress with button accent worn with white leggings at the Global Carnival's Flipper ride.

FUN FESTIVITIES. Fuchsia puff sleeved dress with playful dot accents and white eyelet hemline at the Global Carnival.

MOOD SWINGER. Fun awaits kids in this pink and fuchsia sun burst printed V-neck tent dress shot in Global Carnival's Swinger ride.

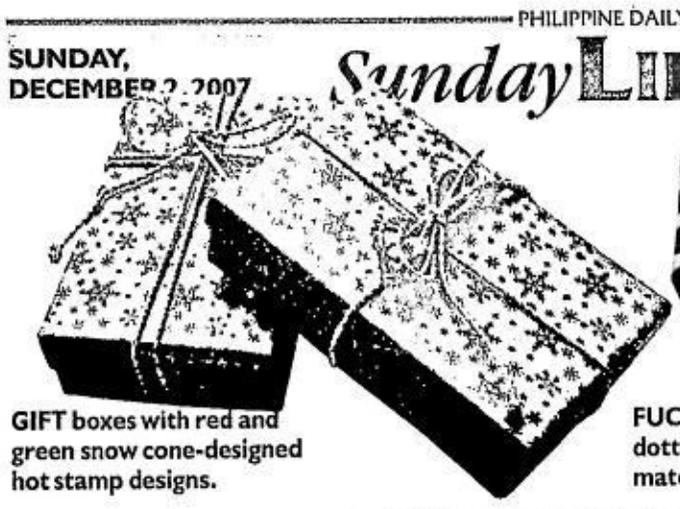
HOLIDAY HIGH. White puff sleeved tunic top worn with red leggings.

It's A Wrap!

WITH so many presents, and oh so little time to prepare for the holidays, you can be a wrap star with perfect packaging from SM's Stationery and Supplies Department. After all, the way you present your gifts is as important as the way you select your gifts for your loved ones.

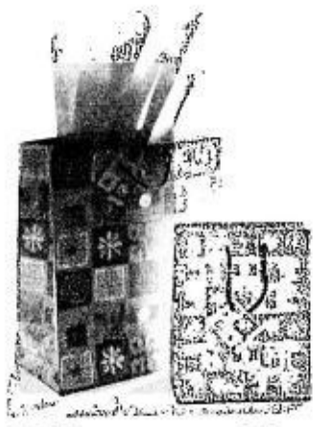
Festive gift boxes make the perfect holiday statement - take your pick from playful dot, floral prints, and swirl and stripes designs or try hot stamped boxes in metallic finishes, and gift bags with endearing snowflake and snowman themes. If you prefer the traditional way of wrapping, you'll love the non-woven and embossed wraps which come in a wide variety of colors. To complete your holiday package, add eye-catching accents like balloons, roses, and pretty gift cards.

The collection is available at the Stationery and Supplies Department of all SM stores. Gift wrapping services from Hallmark are also available in the area.



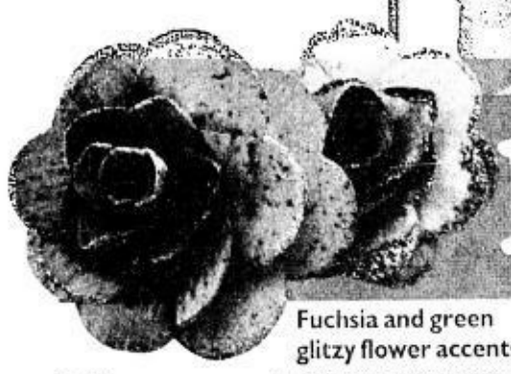
GIFT boxes with red and green snow cone-designed hot stamp designs.

FUCHSIA and blue polka-dotted gift boxes in soft material with bow accents.



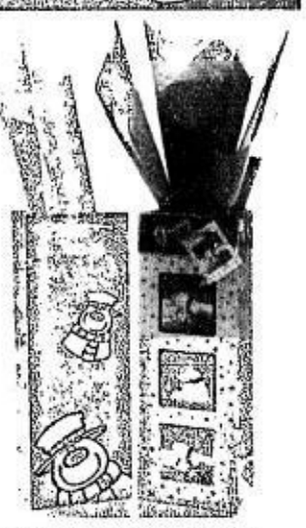
COOL green paper gift bags with snow cones and stars as accents.

PINK round gift boxes with rainbow color swirl designs.

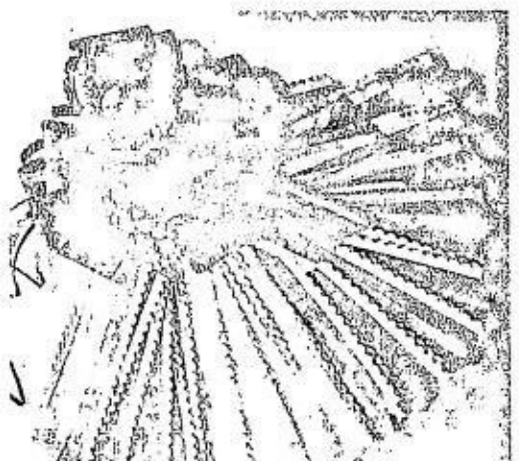


Fuchsia and green glitzy flower accents.

NON-WOVEN gift wrappers in assorted colors.

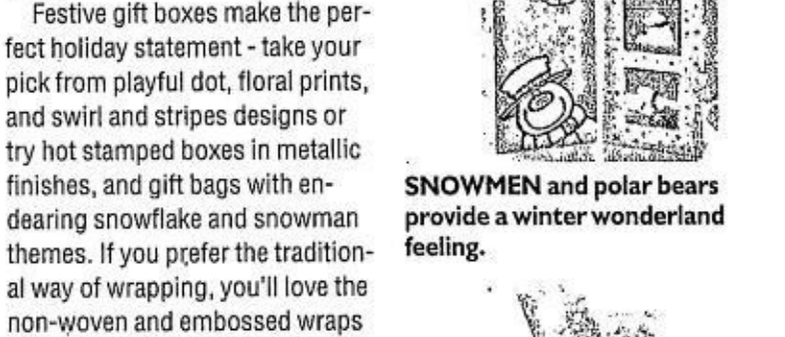


SNOWMEN and polar bears provide a winter wonderland feeling.

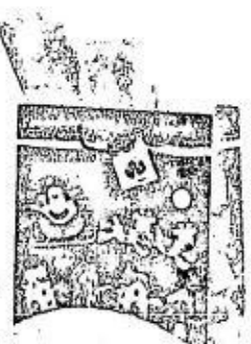


NON-WOVEN pull bows with scalloped edging.

PLAYFUL dots and sweet stripes interplay in this beautiful gift box which comes in different sizes.

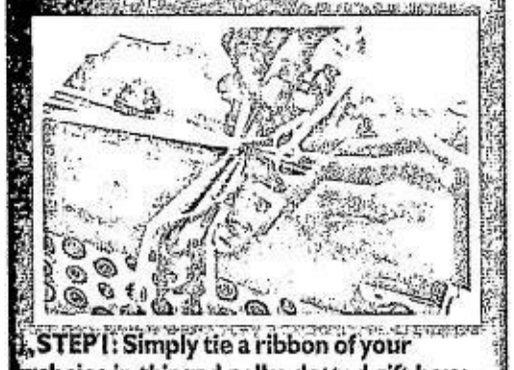


THESE non-woven bows in festive colors make great accents for plain gift boxes.



SANTA could make his Christmas rounds in this paper gift .

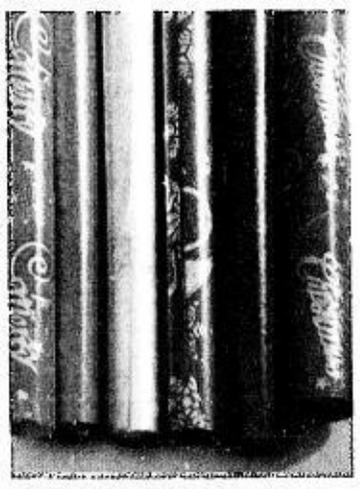
STEP BY STEP



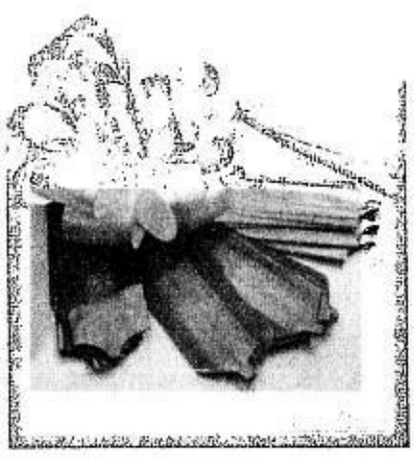
STEP1: Simply tie a ribbon of your choice in this red polka dotted gift box.

STEP2: Put a flower balloon on top of the box and tie it with the ribbon.

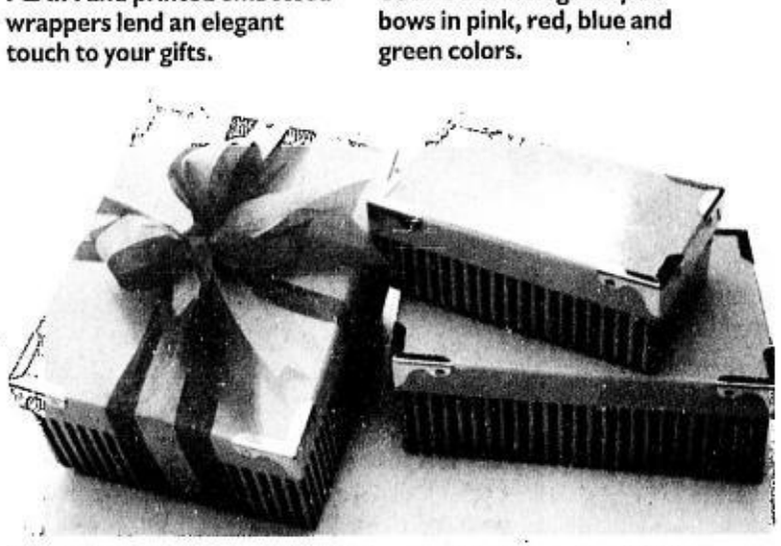
STEP3: This Beautiful present is ready for giving.



PLAIN and printed embossed wrappers lend an elegant touch to your gifts.



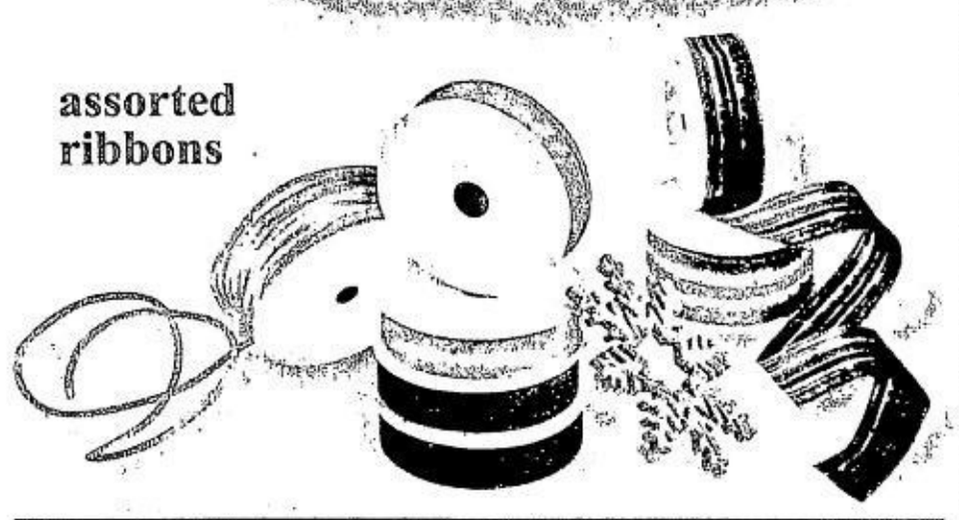
ONE-STEP hologram pull bows in pink, red, blue and green colors.



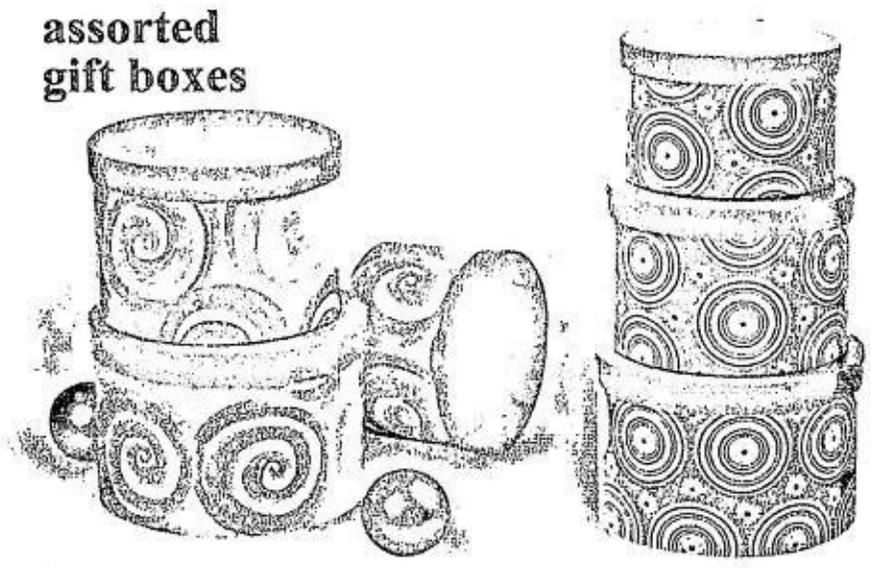
BLUE STRIPED rectangular gift boxes with silver edge detailing.

Holiday fun wraps

assorted ribbons

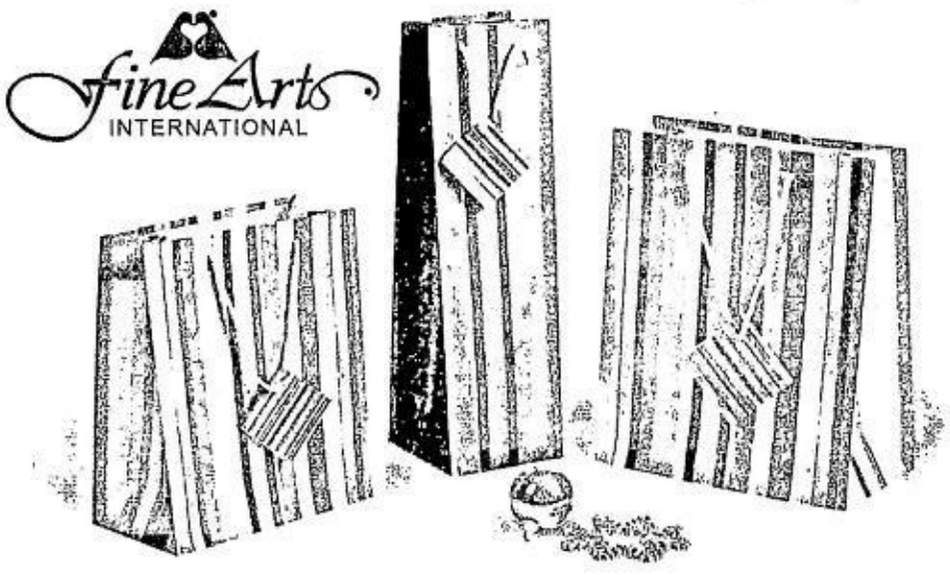


assorted gift boxes

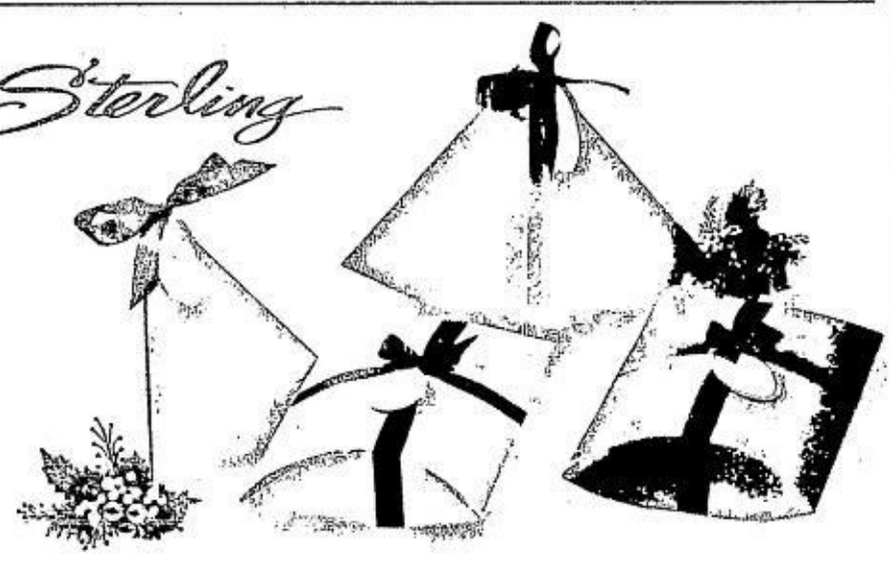


assorted holiday wraps

Fine Arts INTERNATIONAL



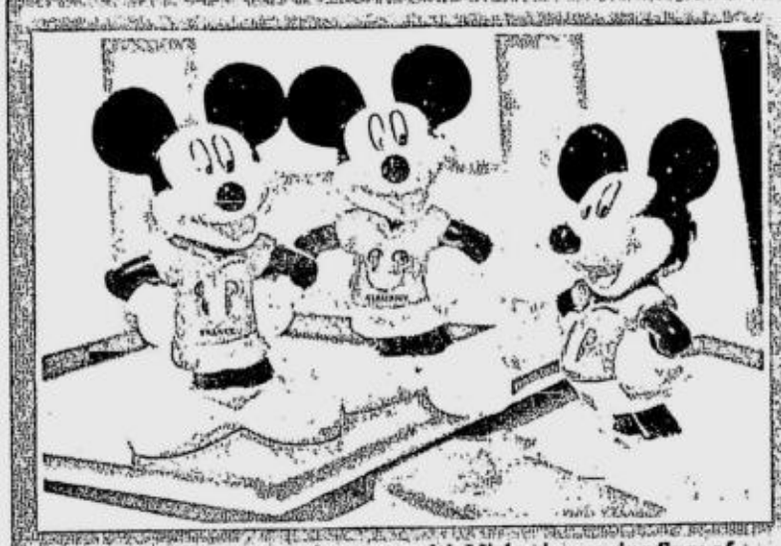
Sterling



Makati • Cubao • Harrison • North Edsa
Sta. Mesa • Ortigas • Las Piñas • Bacoor
Fairview • Manila • Pampanga
Mandurriao • Delgado • Cebu • Davao
Cagayan De Oro • Bicutan • Sucat
Lucena • Baguio • Marilao • Dasmariñas
San Lazaro • Batangas • Sta. Rosa
Clark • Mall of Asia • Lipa • Bacolod • Taytay

stationery & supplies
ALL THE plants STUFF

AT SM DEPARTMENT STORE



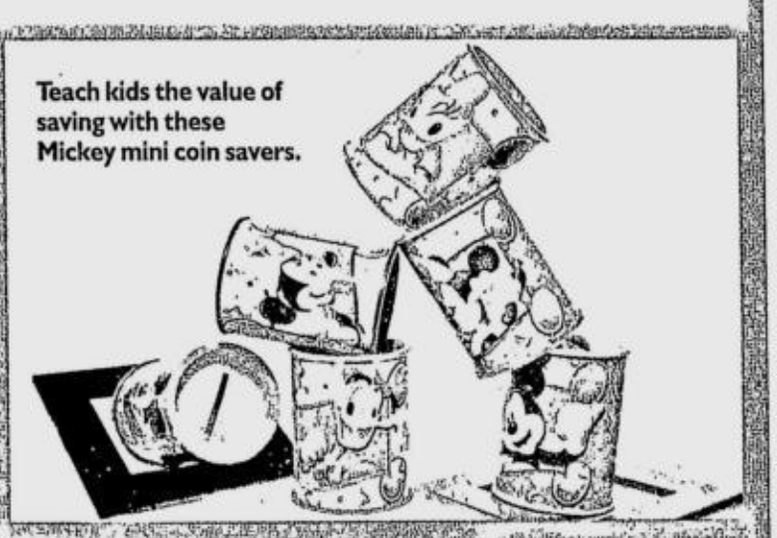
ENJOY a fun European adventure with Mickey's wearing flags of France, Germany and Italy.

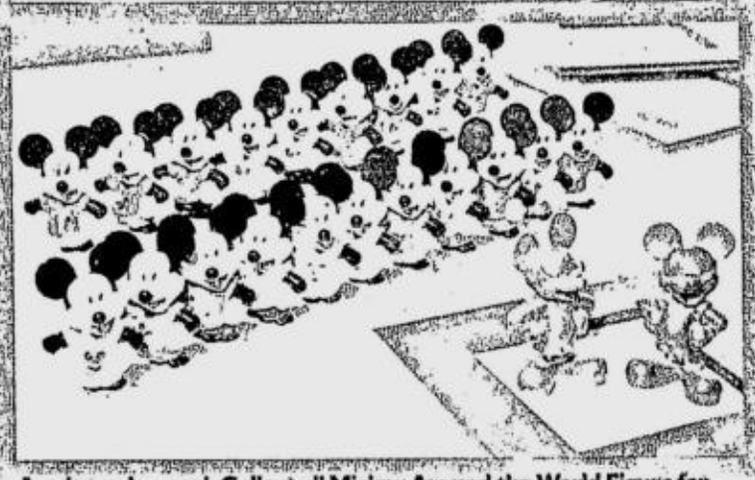
JAZZ up bags, jackets, or anything with Mickey Mouse novelty pins.

CUDDLY 26" Mickey and Minnie plush dolls.

SPECIAL edition collectible Mickey figures from Toy Kingdom and Toy Kingdom Express.

Teach kids the value of saving with these Mickey mini coin savers.





A universal appeal. Collect all Mickey Around the World Figure for only P34.75 with every P100 single receipt purchase of Disney items.

Merry with Mickey

MICKEY and Minnie candy dispensers with Pez candies.

TOY KINGDOM, the amazing toy superstore, joins Disney, the Magic Kingdom in treating kids to great stuff and fun activities at the Mickey Mouse Clubhouse this Christmas.

Generations of children all over the world have loved Mickey Mouse, the first ever cartoon character to have a star at the Hollywood Walk of Fame, and the icon for The Walt Disney Company. Mr. Walt Disney himself has acknowledged Mickey's importance by saying "I hope we never lose sight of one fact ... that this was all started by a Mouse."

Mickey was created by Walt Disney and his head animator Ub Iwerks, and originally voiced by Disney himself. He made his first screen debut in Steamboat Willie, the first Mickey sound cartoon, in 1928, and the rest as they say, is history.

The 1930s was Mickey Mouse's Golden Age, and it was during that time that he played 87 various characters in cartoon shorts produced in that decade. The peak of his golden decade was his starring role as the Sorcerer Apprentice in Fantasia (1940).

Seventy-nine years after Steamboat Willie, Mickey continues to be one of the most universal symbols in the 21st century. Many believe that Mickey has endured the test of time because he taught everyone to dream up and to laugh despite their troubles. He continues to amaze the younger generation with his wits, remarks and optimism, and brings his exciting adventures to a new television series, Mickey Mouse Clubhouse that premiered last year on the Disney Channel.

Kids of all ages are in for a merry and magical time at Toy Kingdom's Mickey Mouse Clubhouse. They can relive Mickey's Golden Age with the cuddly Mickey Fantasia stuffed toys which they can purchase for only P299.75 with a minimum P500 single receipt purchase of any item at Toy Kingdom. This promotion is ongoing until December 31.

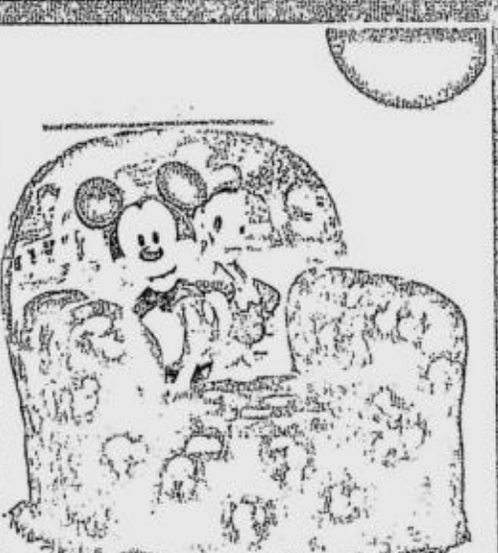
Spread the cheers with Mickey collectibles. You can collect all 20 cute little Mickey Around The World figure with the flags of the different countries or special edition Mickey painted in gold and silver. Mickey Around the World figures can be purchased for only P34.75 with every P100 single receipt purchase of any Disney item at Toy Kingdom and Toy Express until December 31.

Mickey Mouse Clubhouse Stamp Cards are also available with an initial P500 purchase of Disney items until December 25. Also check out the great Mickey stuff ranging from items of mouse proportions like novelty pins, minifans, and yoyos to plush Mickey and Minnie stuffed toys to furniture in for the little Mickey Mouse Clubhouse fan.

Not to be missed is the Mickey Mouse Clubhouse experience where in one can Meet and Greet Mickey and Friends. This will take place from November 30 to December 2 at SM Southmall, December 7 to 9 at SM Southmall, December 7 to 9 at The Block at SM City North EDSA, and from December 18 to 23 at SM Megamall.

Mickey Mouse items are available at all Toy Kingdom Express outlets located at all SM Department Stores and at all Toy Kingdom stores in Metro Manila. Toy Kingdom stores are located at SM Makati, The Podium, Ayala Mall, SM Megamall, SM City Fairview, SM Southmall, The Block at SM City North EDSA, and the SM Mall of Asia. In the provincial areas, these are located at the SM Supermalls in Pampanga, Lucena, Marilao, Baguio, Bacoor, and Batangas in Luzon, and Cebu, Iloilo, Davao, and Cagayan de Oro in the Visayas areas.

KIDS can have a place to relax after play in a Mickey sofa bed.

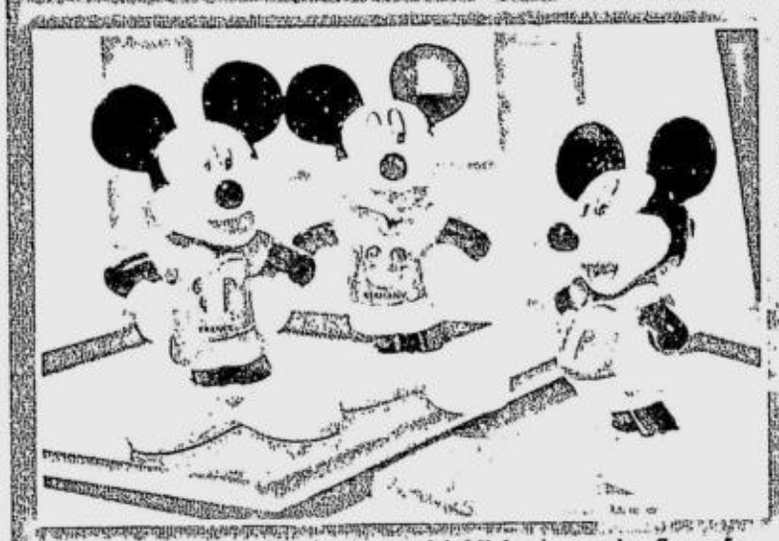


ROCK the day away with Mickey in this Mickey rocking chair.

SOFT and huggable Minnie Flopsies.

GET this Mickey Fantasia Stuffed Toy for only P299.75 with a minimum P500 single receipt purchase of any items, now thru December 31.

IN LOVE with Asia. Get all Mickey's with flags of Asian countries displayed on Mickey's shirt.



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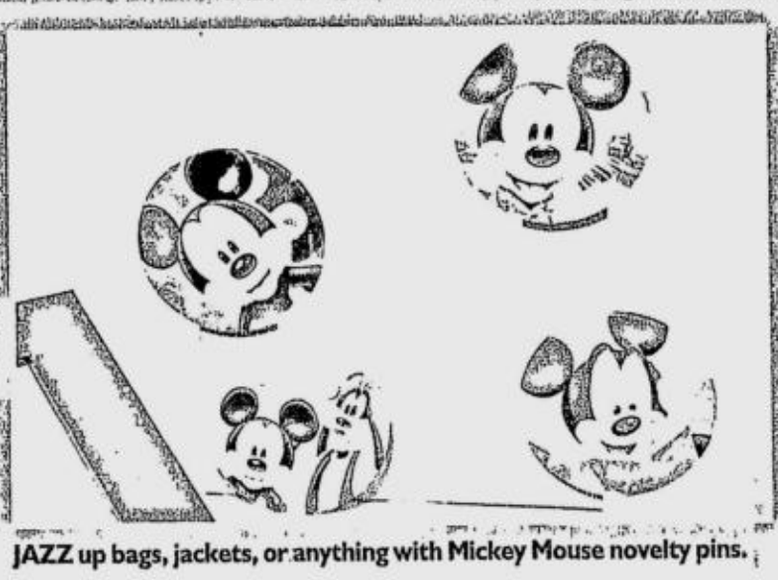

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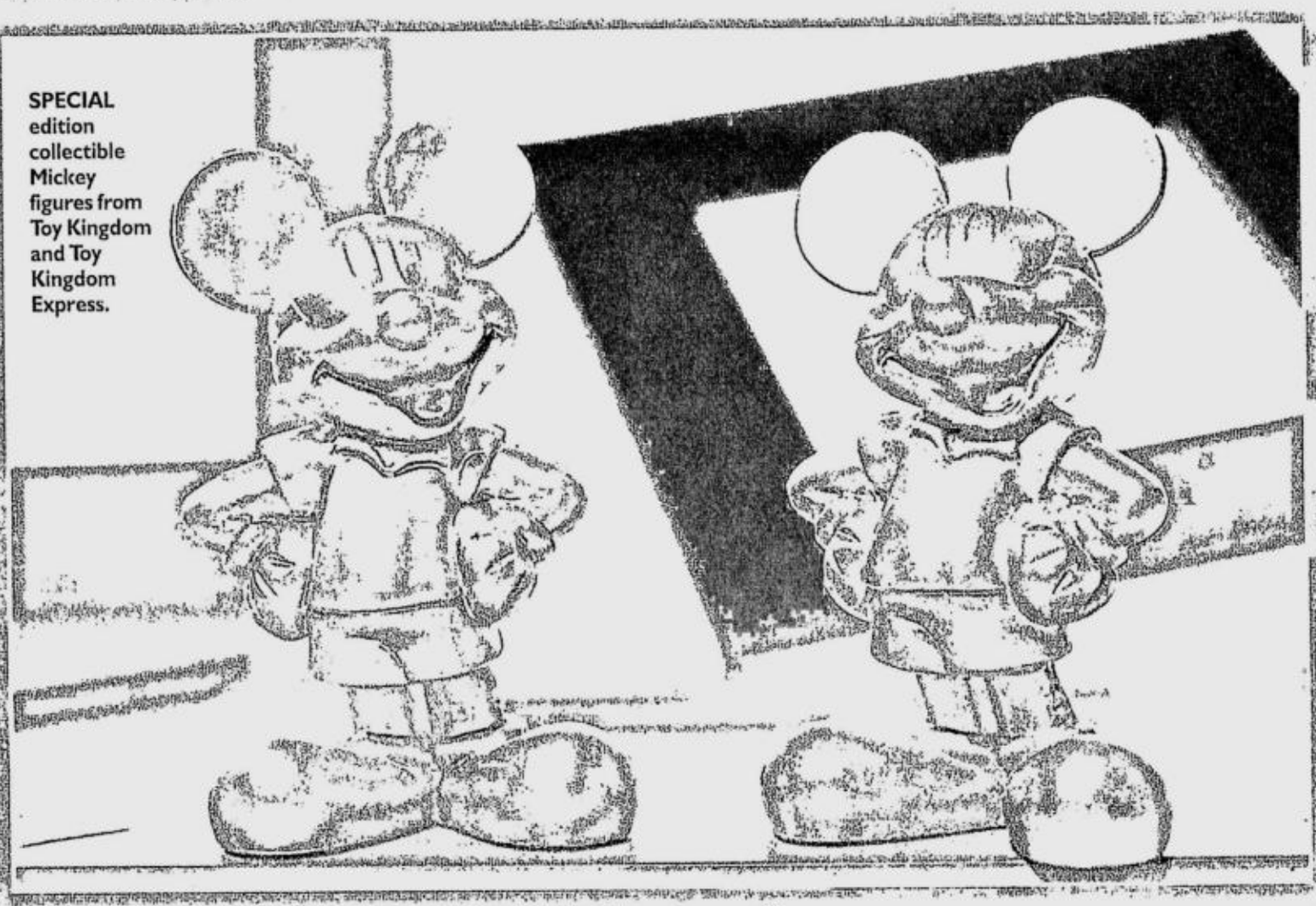

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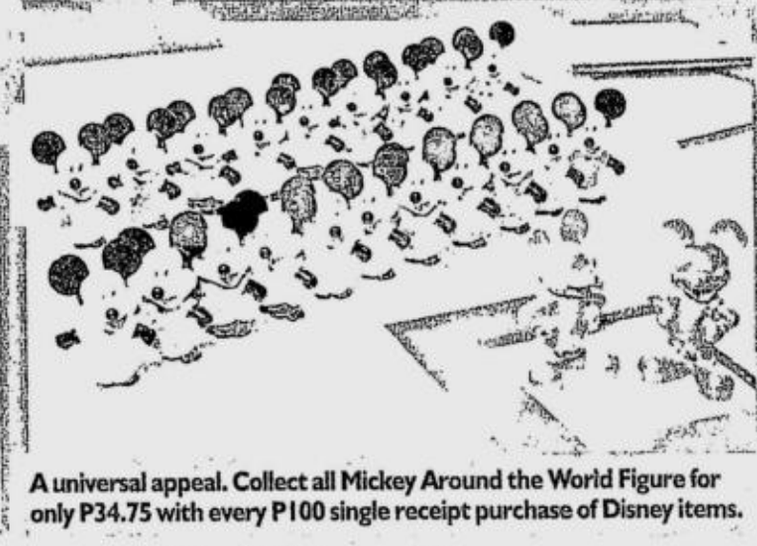

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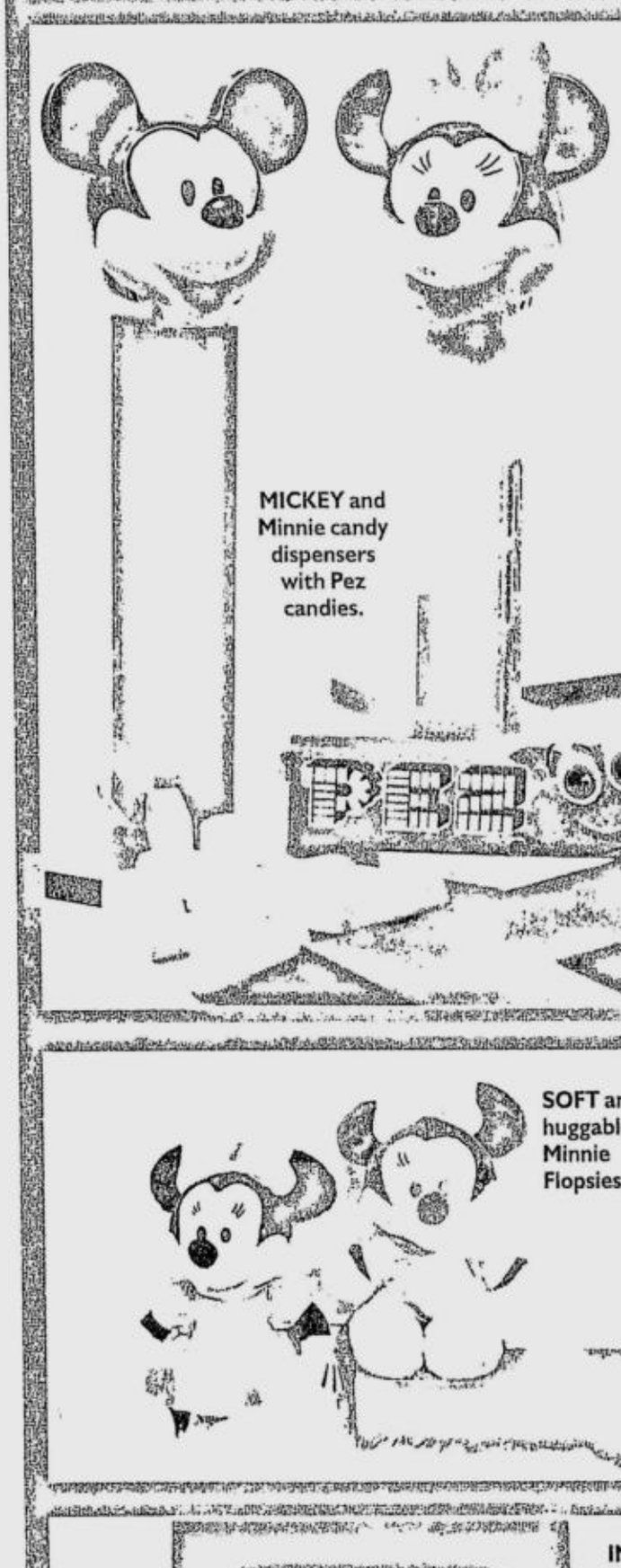
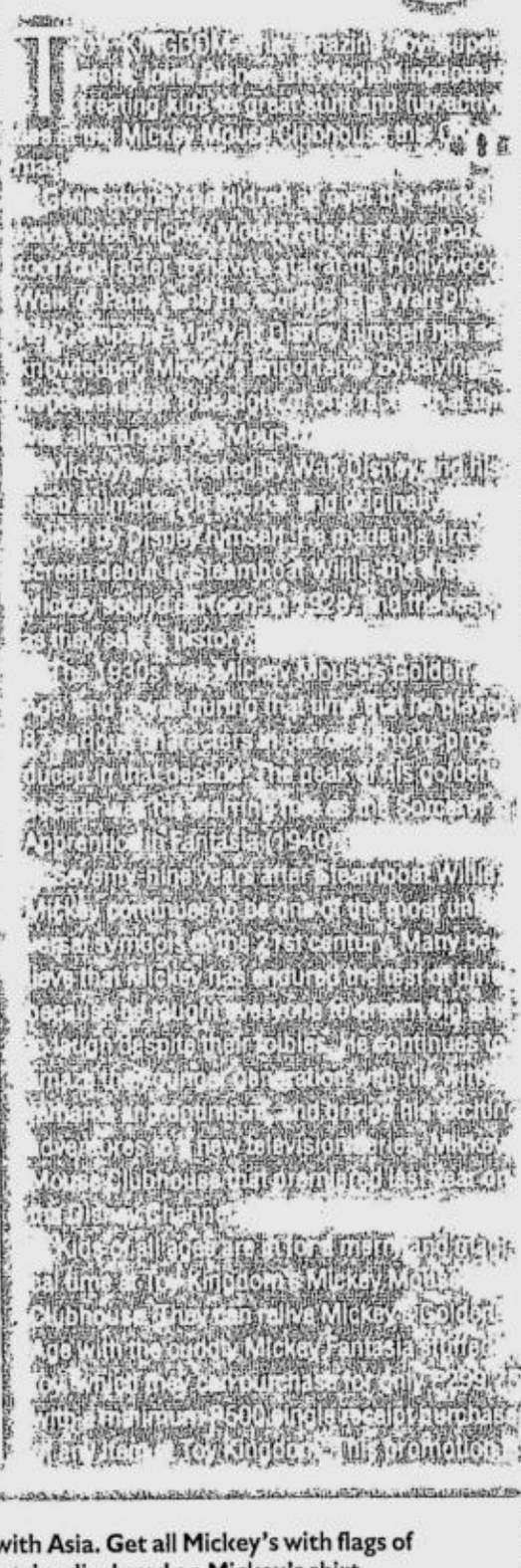
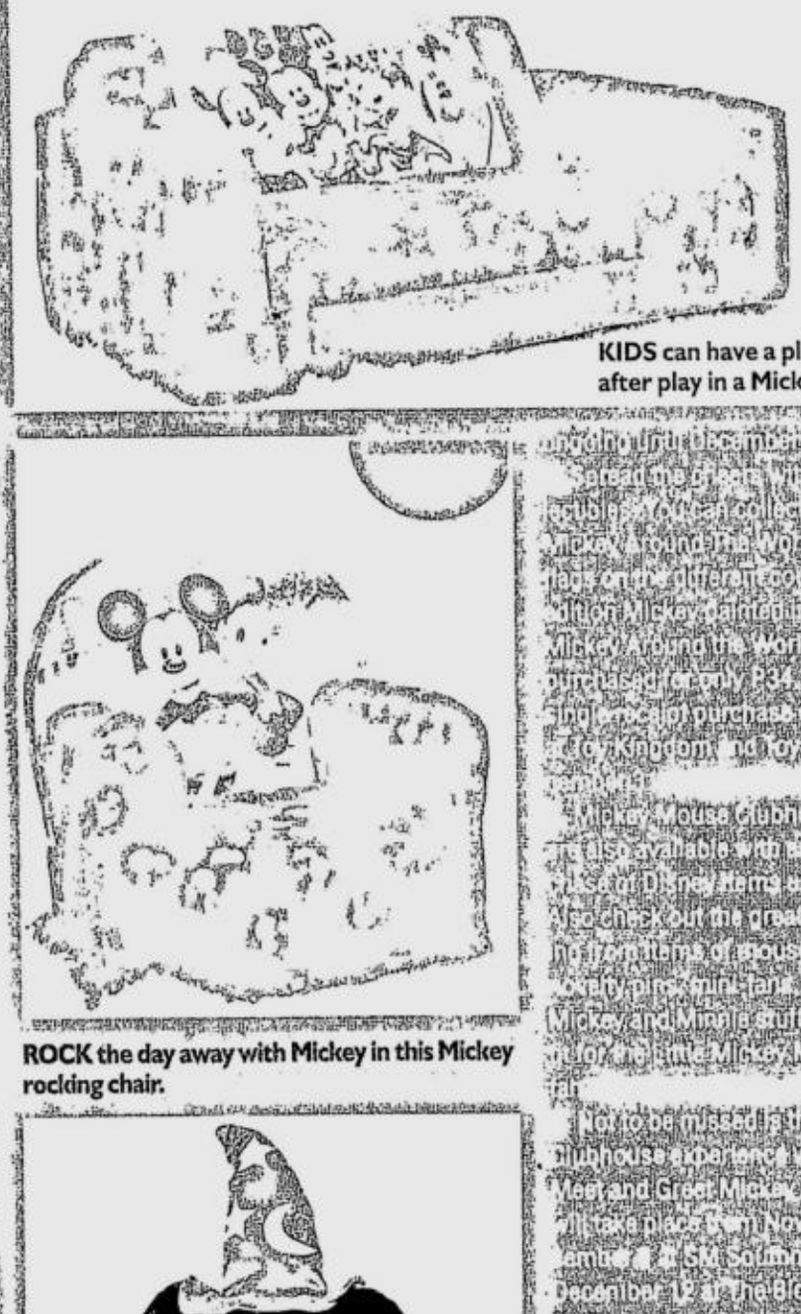


MICKEY and Minnie candy dispensers with Pez candies.





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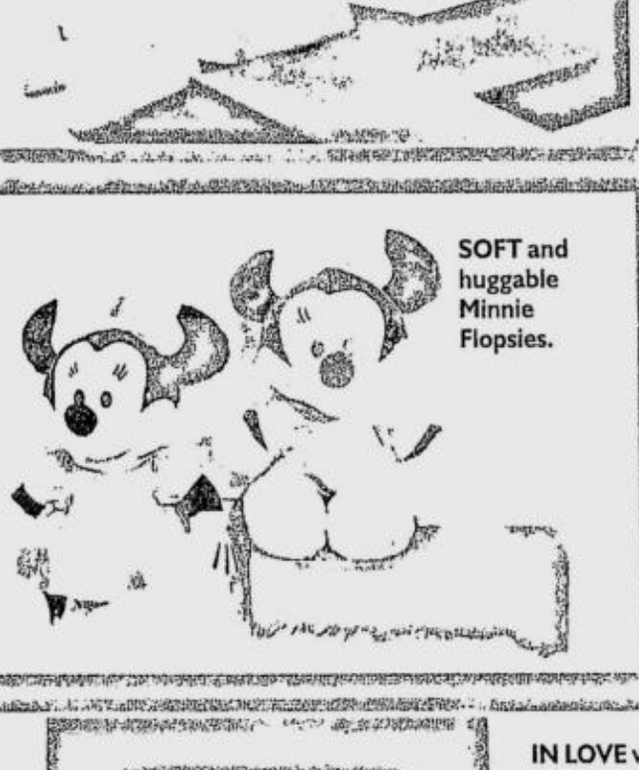

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Disney

MICKEY MOUSE CLUBHOUSE CHRISTMAS

Meet & Greet Mickey & Friends

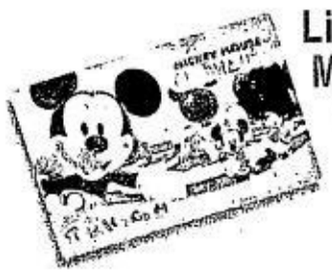
SM SOUTHMALL LAS PIÑAS
Nov. 30 to Dec.2

THE BLOCK SM City North Edsa
Dec. 7 to 12

SM MEGAMALL
Dec. 18 to 23

Mickey-ful Gift Idea

Give this fun-loaded exclusive Limited Edition Mickey Mouse Clubhouse gift card!



Mickey Stamp-Ons

Get Mickey Clubhouse stamp card with an initial P500 purchase of Disney items

Now thru Dec. 31, 2007

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 5565, Series of 2007.

Mickey Fantasia Plush

Only P299.75

with any purchase of Toy Kingdom items.

Now thru Dec. 31, 2007

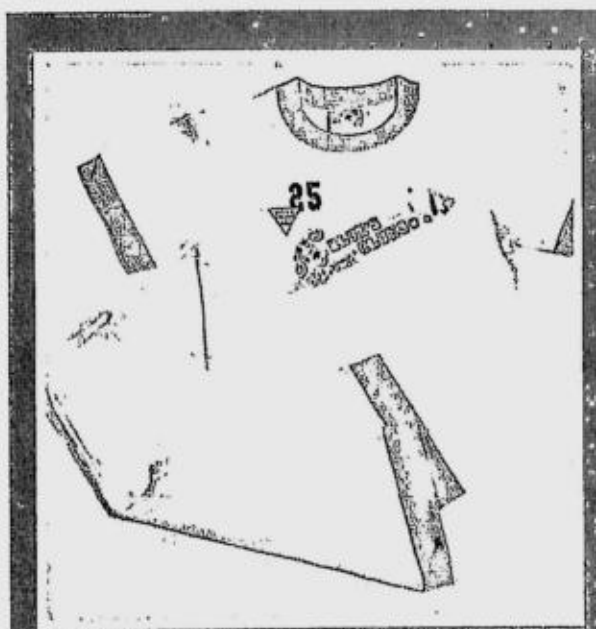
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3749, Series of 2007.

In cooperation with SOFITEL PHILIPPINE PLAZA MANILA

TOY KINGDOM BDO

THE AMAZING TOY STORE!

SM MEGAMALL • Upper Ground Floor, Bldg. A
SM SOUTHMALL • Upper Ground Floor
SM CITY CEBU • Third Floor
SM CITY FAIRVIEW • Upper Ground Floor
SM CITY BACOOR • Upper Ground Floor
SM CITY ILOILO • Lower Ground Floor
SM CITY DAVAO • Second Floor
SM CITY PAMPANGA • Ground Floor, Annex 2
SM CITY LUCENA • Second Floor
SM CITY BAGUIO • Second Floor
SM CITY MARILAO • Second Floor
SM MAKATI • Third Floor, SM Annex
SM CITY BATANGAS • Ground Floor
THE PODIUM • Third Floor
V-MALL • Second Floor
SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO • Second Floor
SM MALL OF ASIA • Second Level, Main Mall
SM NORTH EDSA • Third Floor THE BLOCK



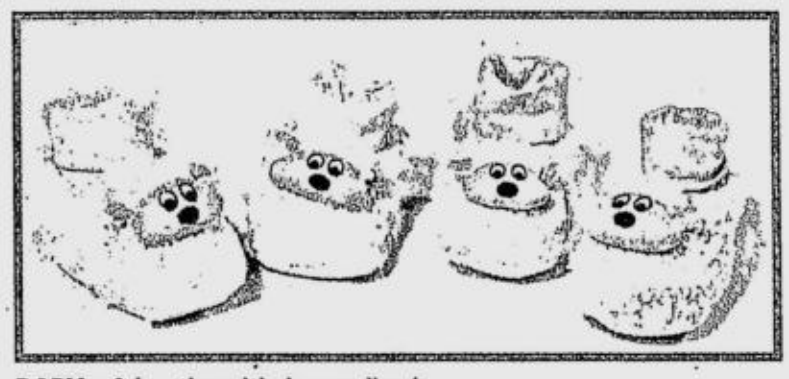
ORANGE Blue's Clues pajama set with blue piping.

GREEN animal printed shirt and matching shorts.

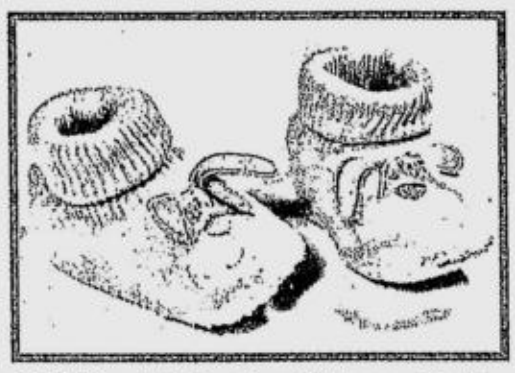
STAR Baby's white puff sleeved shirt with butterfly, floral, and bow accents with matching denim shorts and red checkered eyelet hemline.

GREEN and pink Barbie spaghetti strapped shirt with matching bottoms.

YELLOW checkered short set with giraffe accents.



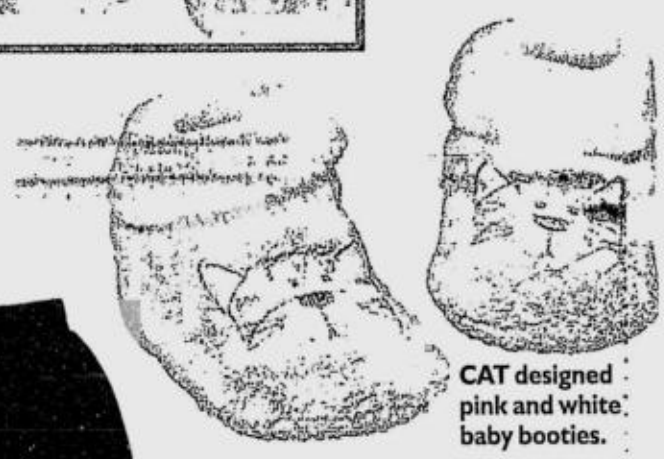
BABY soft booties with dog appliqués.



BABY blue baby booties with dog appliqués.

FUN AND FASHION. She's wearing a cherry printed sleeveless dress worn with a red knitted cardigan while he's in a three-toned collared shirt with patch accents and denim shorts.

Baby Love



CAT designed pink and white baby booties.

YELLOW BELLE. This yellow dress with matching bolero blooms with floral and butterfly accents.

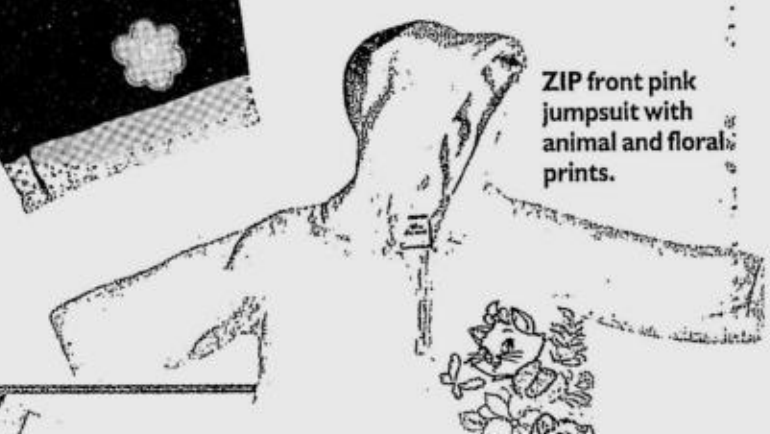
CHRISTMAS IS FOR BABIES, TOO. AND for the Season's get-togethers, bundle up your bundle of joy in style with the cutest clothes from SM's Infants Wear Department.

Adorable baby girls will bask in the season's cheery spirit with dainty dresses, tops, shorts with floral prints, luscious cherry prints, playful dots, and butterfly appliqués. Fun loving baby boys, on the other hand, will be the life of the party in shorts sets with checkered, patchwork, and printed designs.

As they're ready for dreamland, cuddle them up in romper sets, jumpsuits and pajamas inspired by their Disney friends, Mickey and Minnie Mouse. Let them take their first holiday baby footsteps with soft baby booties with animal appliqués.

Make baby's first holiday out memorable with clothes from the Infants Wear Department of all SM stores.

LOVELY LILAC checkered designed shorts set with pink floral appliqué by Star Baby.



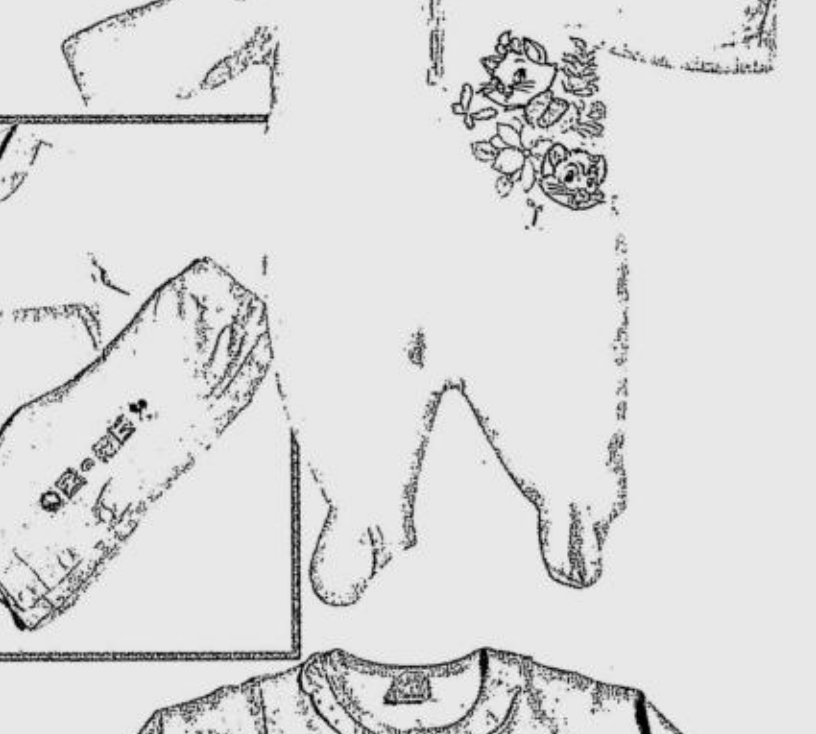
ZIP front pink jumpsuit with animal and floral prints.

TWO-TONED blue pajama set with Mickey Mouse and Lion design by Disney.

"A DAY With My Friendly Lion" mint green romper by Disney.

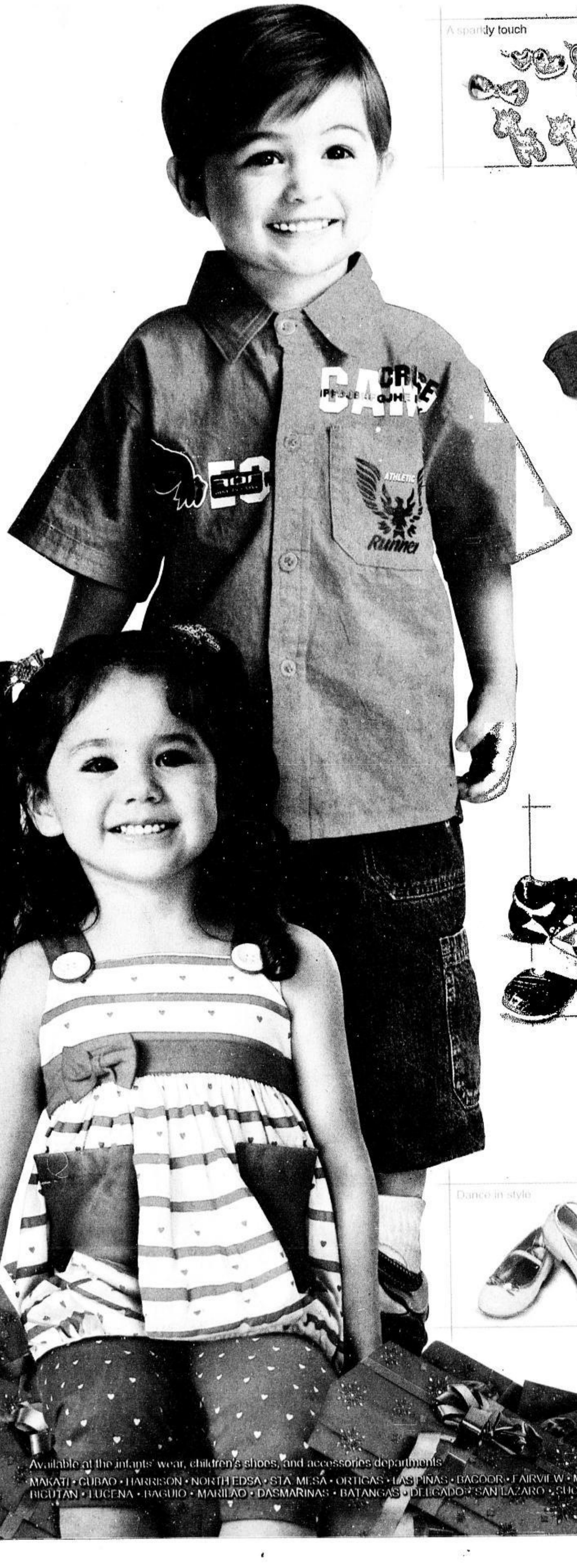
ORANGE sleeveless dress with polka dot puppy and bow design with matching polka dotted pajama by Star Baby.

EMBOSSED "Little Scooter" prints accent this blue shirt with matching shorts.

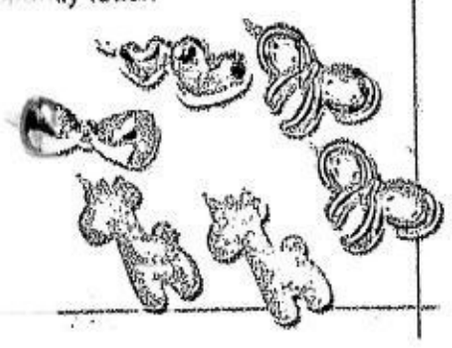


MINNIE Mouse jumpsuit with ruffle and star accents by Disney.

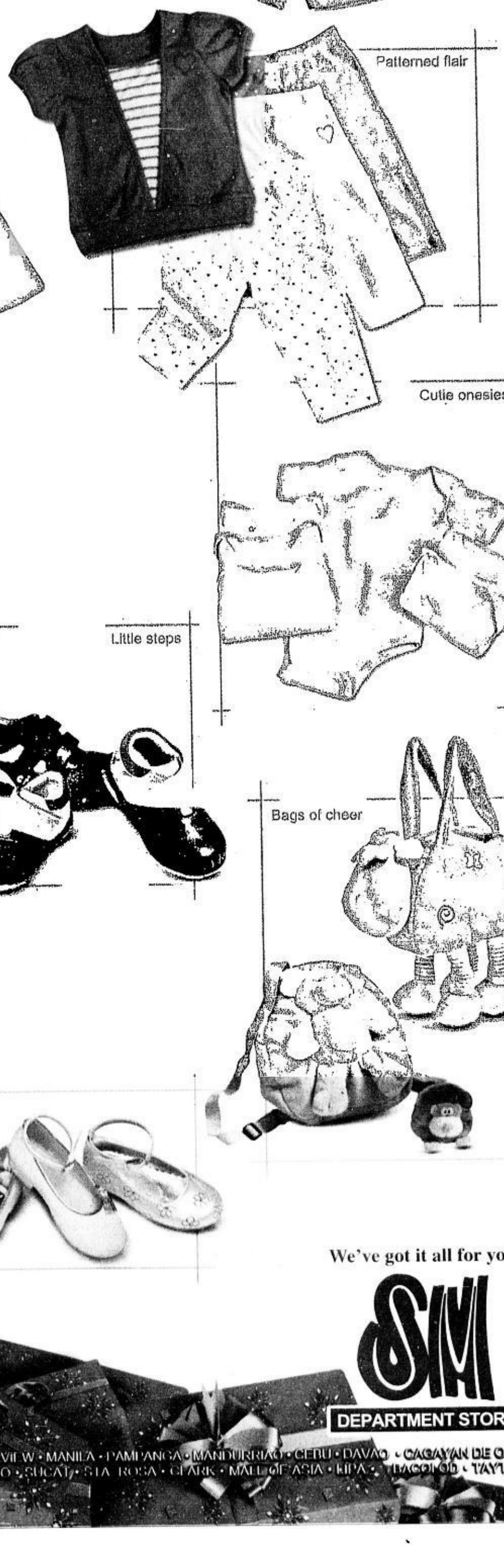
all you want to Give
all you want to Get



A sparkly touch

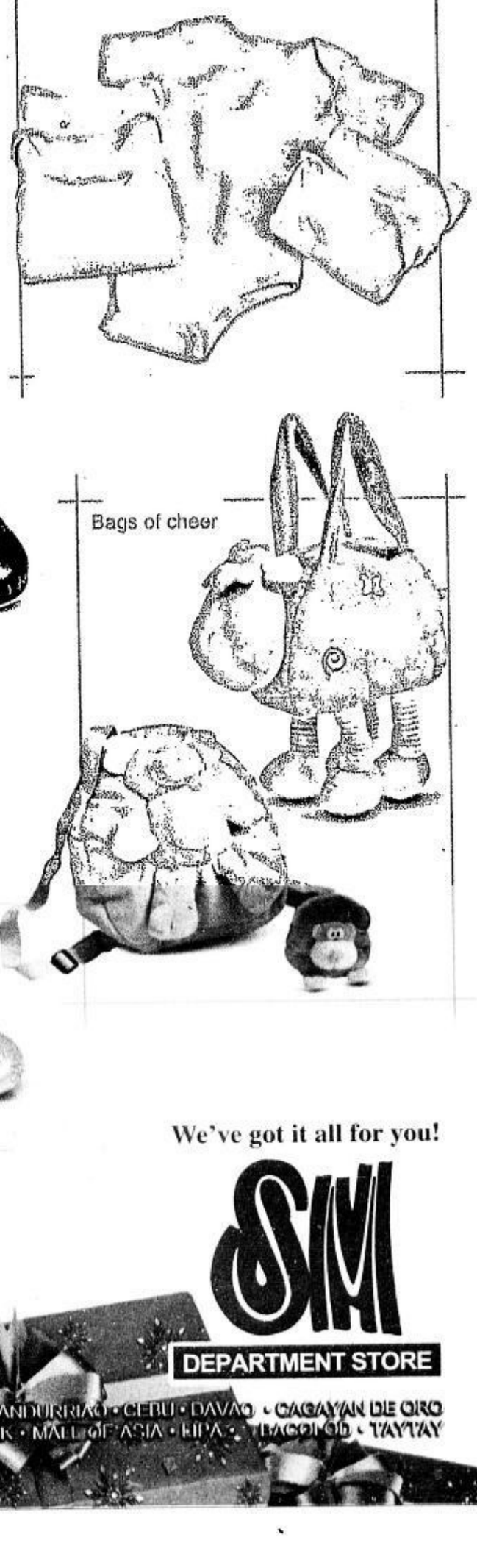


Merry little gentlemen



Patterned flair

Cutie onesies



Little steps

Bags of cheer

Dance in style

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all you want to Give
all you want to Get

Hip holiday

Step it up

Pretty in pink

Party princess packs

Shiny strides

We've got it all for you!

SM DEPARTMENT STORE

Available at the children's wear, shoes, and accessories departments

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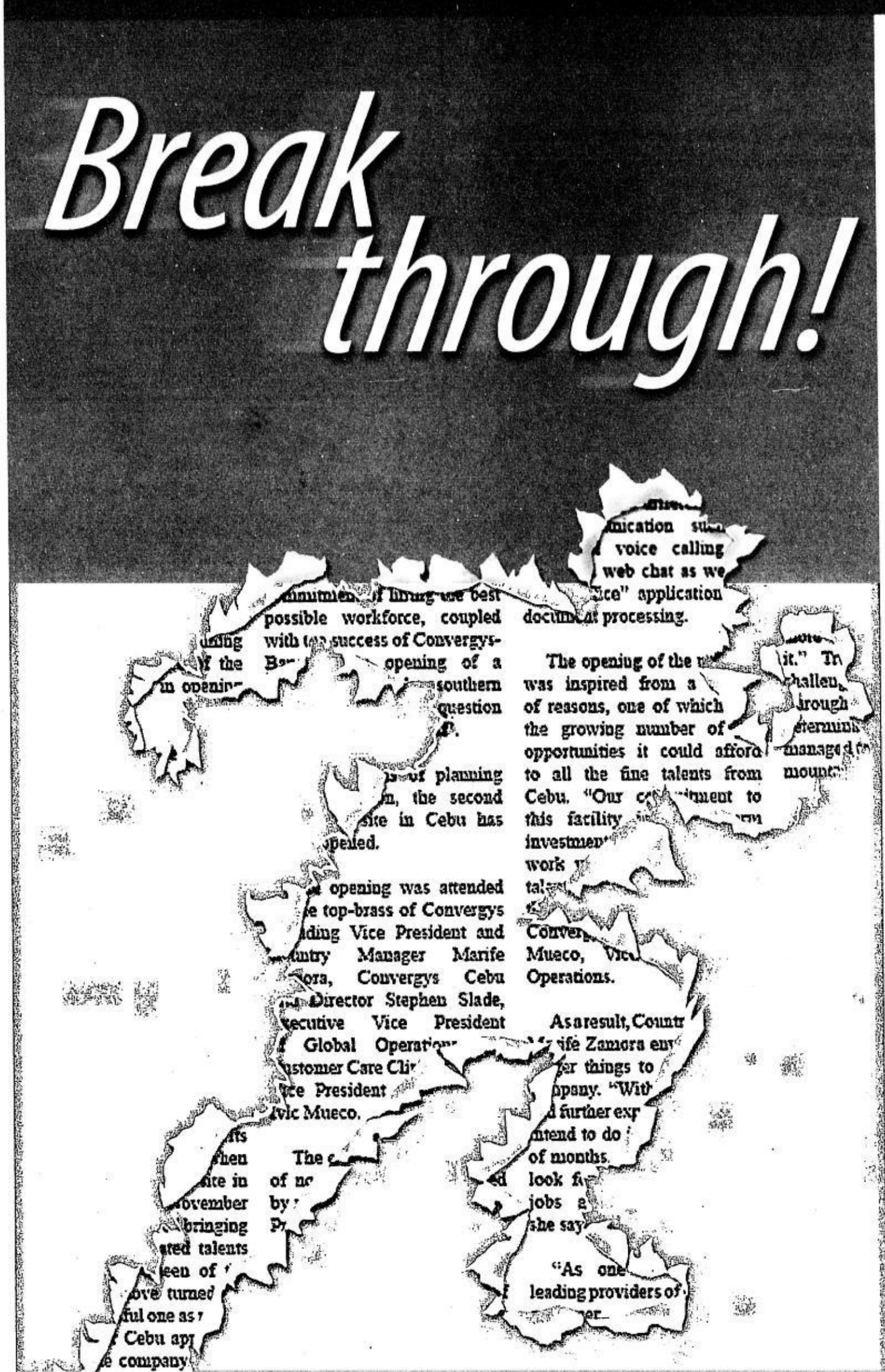
Break through!



...nication sui... voice calling web chat as we ...ice" application document processing.

...nitment of hiring the best possible workforce, coupled with the success of Convergys-... the Ba... opening of a ... in openin... southern ... question ...

...of planning ...m, the second ...site in Cebu has ...pened.

...opening was attended ...e top-brass of Convergys ...ding Vice President and ...untry Manager Marife ...ora, Convergys Cebu ...Director Stephen Slade, ...ecutive Vice President ... Global Operation... ...ustomer Care Cli... ...ce President ... ...vic Mueco.

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"As one ... ...leading providers of ... ...er...

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- Please email resumes to *vincent.noel.d.bugay@convergys.com*

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Customer Service Associates -*Semi-Technical Account*

Team Leaders - *for Technical, Insurance & Chat Account*
Quality Evaluators
Spanish-Speaking Quality Evaluators
HR Officer
HR Specialist
Recruitment Coordinators (*2 positions*)
Network Service Engineer

OPENINGS IN COMMONWEALTH:

Customer Service Associates- *Satellite TV Account*
Customer Service Associates- *Automotive Account*
Customer Service Associates- *Technical Support (Full Time)*
Customer Service Associates- *Technical Support (Part Time)*
Operations Manager - *Technical Account*
Workforce Management Specialist
Recruitment Officer
Recruitment Specialist
HR Officer
- Please email resumes to *rachel.ramirez@convergys.com*

OPENINGS IN MAKATI:

Customer Service Associates - *Technical Support*
Customer Service Associates
Sourcing Coordinator
Recruitment Officer
Sr. Branding Officer

OPENINGS IN ORTIGAS:

Outbound Collections Representatives
Customer Service Associates - *Financial and Sales*
Customer Service Associates - *Technical*
Compliance Manager- *Financial Account*
Data Network Manager
- Please email resumes to *aireen.grace.a.palafox@convergys.com*

Get Hired for our Technical Account in ORTIGAS and receive a P5,000 Christmas Bonus! *

*For processed applicants starting Nov 19 - Dec 18, 2007. Terms and conditions apply

OPENINGS IN U-BELT:

Recruitment Associate *(Contractual)*

Our office at the U-Belt is, likewise, accepting applications for all Convergys sites.

CATCH US ON THESE DATES FOR OUR JOB FAIRS / CAMPUS EVENTS

Nov 30 - Dec 2, Dec 7-9 - Ayala Center Cebu (Rotunda Area 2 fronting Blue Magic)
Nov 30 - Dec 2 - Jobquest Job Fair (Megatrade Hall I), Megamall
Dec 1 - 15 - Recruitment Kiosk (Groundfloor lobby, i2 Bldg., Asiatown, IT, Park)
Dec 3-7- UP Diliman, Business Admin Bldg
Dec 6-7 - STI National Youth Convention CAP, Cebu
Dec 6-7 - Jobs Up Dumaguete Jobfair
Dec 10-16- 2nd Level Festival Mall, Alabang

Get P20,000 Christmas bonus

if you get hired for our SELECTED Technical Account in **Makati** and **Cebu**
- P7,500 upon second day of training
- P7,500 upon completion of product training
- P5,000 on the 90th day of employment

CONVERGYS is committed to the career growth of its agents, team leaders, senior team leaders and operations managers through its highly-structured career path and an intensive Management Development Program.

*Walk-in applicants in casual attire will be entertained until December.

ALABANG OFFICE
Block 44, Northgate Cyberzone, Muntinlupa City
(02) 758-1558 / 7581553

CEBU BANAWA OFFICE
R. Arcenas St., Arcenas Estate, Banawa Hills, Cebu City
(032) 4165810 / 4119218

CEBU ASIATOWN IT PARK OFFICE
11/F i2 Bldg. Asiatown IT Park, Lahug, Cebu City
(032) 4119217 / 4119218

COMMONWEALTH OFFICE
2/F Diliman Commercial Center, #46 Don Mariano Marcos Ave. Diliman, Quezon City
(02) 756-7019 / 7567200

MAKATI OFFICE
Convergys One, 6796 Ayala Ave., cor Salcedo St. Legaspi Village, Makati City
(02) 792 - 3182 / 7923136

ORTIGAS OFFICE
24th Floor, Robinsons Equitable Tower, #4 ADB Ave. Ortigas Center, Pasig City
(02) 756 -7274 / 8577652

U-BELT OFFICE
Level 1, St. Thomas Square 1150 España Boulevard cor. Padre Campa St. Sampaloc, Manila
(02) 735-2006

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Republic of the Philippines
Department of Social Welfare and Development
Batasan Pambansa Complex, Constitution Hills, Quezon City

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

The DSWD recently received a grant from World Bank – Policy and Human Resource Development (PHRD) through the project entitled "National Sector Support for Social Welfare and Development Reform" to support its efforts to undertake institutional reforms to make it better fit to lead and steer the development and implementation of social sector programs. The project aims to reduce the vulnerability and increase the capacities of the poorest and most marginalized groups through improved basic social welfare and social protection services.

Towards the above, the Project will engage the services of the:

TRAINING SPECIALIST

Qualification Requirements:

1) At least twelve (12) years experience in designing and implementing training programs for the public and private sector, national and local levels;
2) Sufficient familiarity with the social welfare and development sector; and
3) Ability to communicate effectively with trainors and senior officials.

Major Deliverables:

1. Report on the results of the review of current Training Programs of DSWD
2. Training Needs Assessment Instrument
3. Comprehensive Training Program Design and curriculum of the different individual training programs
4. Curriculum design of continuing education of DSWD staff

Duration of the consultancy:

Six (6) months

Application Requirements:

1) Expressions of Interest/Application letter briefly stating how you meet each of the qualification standards (maximum of two (2) pages)
2) Latest Curriculum Vitaé
3) Outputs from previous engagement (at least two (2) samples)
4) A list of references (with full contact details) from the last three (3) employers

Interested Applicants shall submit all the requirements to **Bids and Awards Committee Secretariat**, 2nd floor, DSWD Central Office, Batasan Pambansa Complex, Constitution Hills, Quezon City with telephone number 931-8101 loc. 217, Fax : 951-71-16, e-mail; **bacsec@dswd.gov.ph** or **dswdbacsec@yahoo.com**, until **December 7, 2007 at 5:00 P.M.**

(Sgd.) **DIRECTOR ARNEL B. GARCIA**
Vice-Chairperson, Bids and Awards Committee

SAMSUNG

SAMSUNG CORPORATION

Bridges Project, The Palm Jebel Ali, Dubai

Samsung Corporation Engineering and Construction Group is in urgent need of Engineers for the following posts

- SCHEDULERS
- QUANTITY SURVEYORS
- LAND SURVEYORS
- BRIDGE ENGINEERS
- SITE ENGINEERS
- QA/QC ENGINEERS
- CAD OPERATORS

Required Qualification & Experience:

* Must have 5 - 10 years experience in construction projects.
* Preferably with experience in Roads and Bridges construction projects.

Note: Employer will shoulder the interview cost of qualified Applicants including transportation, except, plane tickets

We offer competitive salary!!!

Final Interview is on: December 08-12 2007

APPLY NOW PERSONALLY TO:
MPL INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION
2/F Victoria Bldg., 429 United Nations Ave.
Ermita, Manila, Tel. Nos. 5260891, 5260984
E-Mail: mplhkk@pldtdsl.net
POEA License No. 071-LB-032607-R
"MAG-INGAT SA MGA ILLEGAL RECRUITERS"
For manpower pooling only. No fees to be collected

CIBI Information Inc.

CIBI Information Inc. is the market leader in the business information service with international affiliations. The company offers various services such as: Business Reports, Pre-employment Verification, Property Appraisal, Credit Risk Evaluation, Receivable Management, Business Education Services and the publisher of the Philippines 5000 Corporations.

We are inviting dynamic and aggressive individuals who are willing to take the challenge of becoming part of our company.

ACCOUNT OFFICER

- Graduate of any 4-year business course
- Good communication skills, strong customer service & interpersonal skills
- Preferably at least 1 year related working experience

CALL CENTER AGENTS/TELE-MARKETER/TELE-COLLECTOR

- College Graduate of any 2 or 4-year course
- Preferably with related working experience
- Good negotiation, analytical and communication skills

SYSTEM ADMINISTRATOR

- Degree in Electronics & Communications Engineering, Computer Engineering or Computer Science is preferred.
- Min. of 2-year hands-on experience with Linux/Unix-based environment
- Can perform installation, administration, support and monitoring of servers and infrastructure. Applications running on CenTOS, Fedora Core Linux servers which include but not limited to mail (Postfix, Spamassas-Sin, ClamAV), file server (Samba) web server (apache), Firewall (Iptables), Proxy (Squid/Delegate), VOIP (Asterisk), DNS (Bind), Database (PostgreSQL) and DHCP server. Applications running on Windows 2003 servers include Active Directory, IIS and DNS.
- Can perform troubleshooting of end-user computer hardware and software problems.

Interested applicants may apply personally or send their resumé with 2x2 picture and Transcript of Records to Human Resources Dept.
CIBI Information Center 3308 Zapote St., Makati City ☎8990015 loc 838
or email resumé to: dvergara@cibi.net.ph or jfuertes@cibi.net.ph

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ROBINSONS LAND CORPORATION

The Property Developer of Choice

ROBINSONS LAND CORPORATION, a giant in the property industry, is in need of high caliber, dynamic and results oriented individuals to join its team as:

ACCOUNT MANAGERS (AM)

Responsibilities:
- Responsible for achieving Robinsons Land Corporation's sales targets through actual selling of the company's projects
- Responsible for establishing good rapport and connection with the clients and other external parties

Qualifications:
- College Graduate
- Preferably with productive real estate selling experience
- Energetic, hard working, sales oriented and with pleasing personality
- With good written and oral communication skills
- Fresh graduates are welcome to apply

SALES MANAGERS (SM)

Responsibilities:
- Responsible for implementing sales strategies and achieving sales targets
- Responsible for the recruitment, training and honing of the salesmanship skills of all Account Managers

Qualifications:
- College Graduate
- With excellent and verifiable sales track record
- Hard working, team oriented and with good management and training skills
- With good written and oral communication skills

NETWORK DISTRIBUTION MANAGER (NDD MANAGER)

Responsibilities:
- Expand Robinsons Land Corporation's broker network
- Monitor and achieve the volume targets of the broker groups

Qualifications:
- College graduate, not more than 45 years old
- With 3 to 5 years brokers management experience
- Preferably with experience in selling mid-to-high end projects
- With strong communication and interpersonal skills
- Exhibits strong leadership, is a team player and results oriented

MARKETING OFFICER (MO)/ MARKETING ASSISTANT (MA)

Responsibilities:
- Provides major support in the conceptualization, development and evaluation of brand programs, PR & Web campaign plus various marketing and sales programs through data gathering/ collection of information necessary in the preparation of the marketing plans and media strategies.

Qualifications:
- College Graduate (Marketing or Communications fields)
- Preferably 3 to 4 years experience for Marketing Officer, 1 to 2 years experience for Marketing Assistant
- Knowledgeable in presenting information and communication materials in print and audio-visual formats
- Proficient with desktop publishing software (Microsoft Office)
- Highly creative and detail oriented
- Organized and with excellent oral and written communication skills

Other positions available:

Business Development Manager, Business Development Officer, Business Development Assistant, IT Officer, Liaison Staff, Customer Financing Officer, Shift Engineers, Financial Analyst, Building Engineer, Assistant Building Engineer, Project Director, Project Manager, Landscape Architect and Executive Assistant

Please send your resume with Subject: Application for (Job Code) to this address:
Sales Administration and Marketing Services Department
c/o Ms. Grace Samson
Robinsons Land Corporation
32nd Floor, Robinsons Equitable Tower
ADB Ave., cor Poveda Street, Ortigas Center, Pasig City

or email your resume to
jobs@robinsonsland.com or grace.samson@robinsonsland.com

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Unit 2, 4/F Bloomingdale Plaza
Shaw Blvd., Bo. Kapitolyo
(near PAG-IBIG/in front of SSS)

FOR IMMEDIATE HIRING

CAR AIRCON TECHNICIAN

MECHANIC
With 3 to 4 years experience
23 to 26 years old

SECRETARY
Accounting graduate / with sales & bookkeeping experience
23 to 25 years old

Bring the following:
Bio-data/Resumé with picture, Transcript of records/ NBI/Police/Barangay Clearance

Apply at:
MIR Auto-Bus Airconditioning
Blk. 6 Lot 10, L. De Guzman St., Concepcion, Marikina City
Tels 997-0570 • 475-1308 • 942-2055

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LEGEND INTERNATIONAL RESORTS LIMITED

The Legend Lives On

A prestigious hotel located at Subic Bay Freeport Zone is currently in need of:

DIRECTOR OF SALES

Job Summary:

To meet objectives, make discretionary decisions, organize, select, and supervise staff, plan, delegate, direct and control the work of hotel corporate sales department within established long and short range departmental objectives under the direction of the First Vice President for Hotel Operations.

Qualifications:

- Minimum of 3 – 5 years working experience holding a managerial position in similar capacity and industry;
- Graduate of a four-year course in a reputable school, preferably major in advertising, hotel management, business administration, commerce or communications;
- Superior presentation and analytical skills, plus demonstrated skills to handle assignments simultaneously;
- Ability to work under pressure and extra hours if needed on assignment;
- Possesses large network of contacts in the industry;
- Well-versed in the areas of hotel sales and promotions;
- Excellent oral and written communication skills.

SECURITY & SAFETY MANAGER

Job Summary:

Plans, leads, organizes and controls all activities related to security management within Legend International Resorts Limited (LIRL) to ensure protection of life, properties and preservation of peace and order. Develops and maintains direct operational supervision and control of the Security and Safety Departments.

Qualifications:

- Minimum of B. S. in either Criminal Justice, Criminology or Police Administration;
- Must have attended Professional Law Enforcement/Security Courses for Executive Management;
- At least ten (10) years work experience in all phases of Law Enforcement or Security;
- Strong management skills;
- Strong interpersonal skills and analytical ability;
- Knowledge in Physical Security;
- Can deal with all types/levels of people;
- Investigative Management Skills;
- Excellent oral and written communication skills;
- Knowledgeable as to criminal laws that affect security;
- Willing to work long hours;
- Professional;
- Fair/Objective;
- Moral courage;
- Honest and trustworthy;
- Loyal and dedicated.

Residents of Olongapo, Zambales, Bataan, Pampanga and/or other areas in Central Luzon are preferred. Interested applicants may send/submit their resumes/bio-data with supporting documents and recent 2x2 photo to:

LEGEND INTERNATIONAL RESORTS LIMITED
Recruitment & Training Office
2F Oak Bldg., Legenda Suites, Cubi Point,
Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Olongapo City 2200
Fax No. (02)712-8575
Email: legendamis@gmail.com

QUALITY LIFE DISCOVERIES
Special People's Hub

Quality Life Discoveries is the country's first integrative rehabilitation center that offers holistic services for the well and differently-abled. Quality Life Discoveries offers the most effective programs available abroad as an individual or adjunct therapy to conventional therapy. We are looking for professionals to fill up the following requirements:

CLINICAL DIRECTOR

- Bachelor's degree in Physical or Occupational Therapy from an accredited college or university
- A background in Clinical Psychology is also welcome
- Male or female, 30 to 40 years old
- At least three years experience in a rehabilitation and treatment services center, supervising clinical personnel and developing, coordinating and managing clinic-based treatment services.
- Shall manage the following areas: Program Implementation, Operations, Client Relations, Facility Maintenance and Safety
- Shall coordinate marketing of the center's treatment services.
- Shall come up with plans to achieve revenue objectives of the center
- Shall maintain awareness of long and short term goals of the center and study opportunities for potential involvement in new service areas

SPEECH THERAPIST

- Graduate of Speech & Language Pathology
- Male or female, 22 to 35 years old
- Must have a relevant experience in a hospital, clinic, educational or day-center setting
- Must be able to assess clients' needs and problems before developing individual treatment programs to enable each client to improve as much as possible.
- Shall identify children's developmental speech and communication difficulties/ disorders;
- Shall assess/treat swallowing and communication difficulties arising from a variety of causes, *e.g. congenital problems (such as cleft palate) or acquired disorders after a stroke or injury;*
- Shall device, implement and revise relevant treatment programs;
- Shall maintain confidential client case notes and reports, as well as information for clients, carers and other professionals;
- Shall manage a caseload taking account of priority cases, waiting lists, and successful outcomes

Interested parties may apply personally and bring comprehensive resume and latest 2 X 2 photo to No. 70, 20th Avenue, Murphy, Quezon City from Mondays to Saturdays or call 491-6287 and look for Melissa or send e-mail to tasco_inc@yahoo.com

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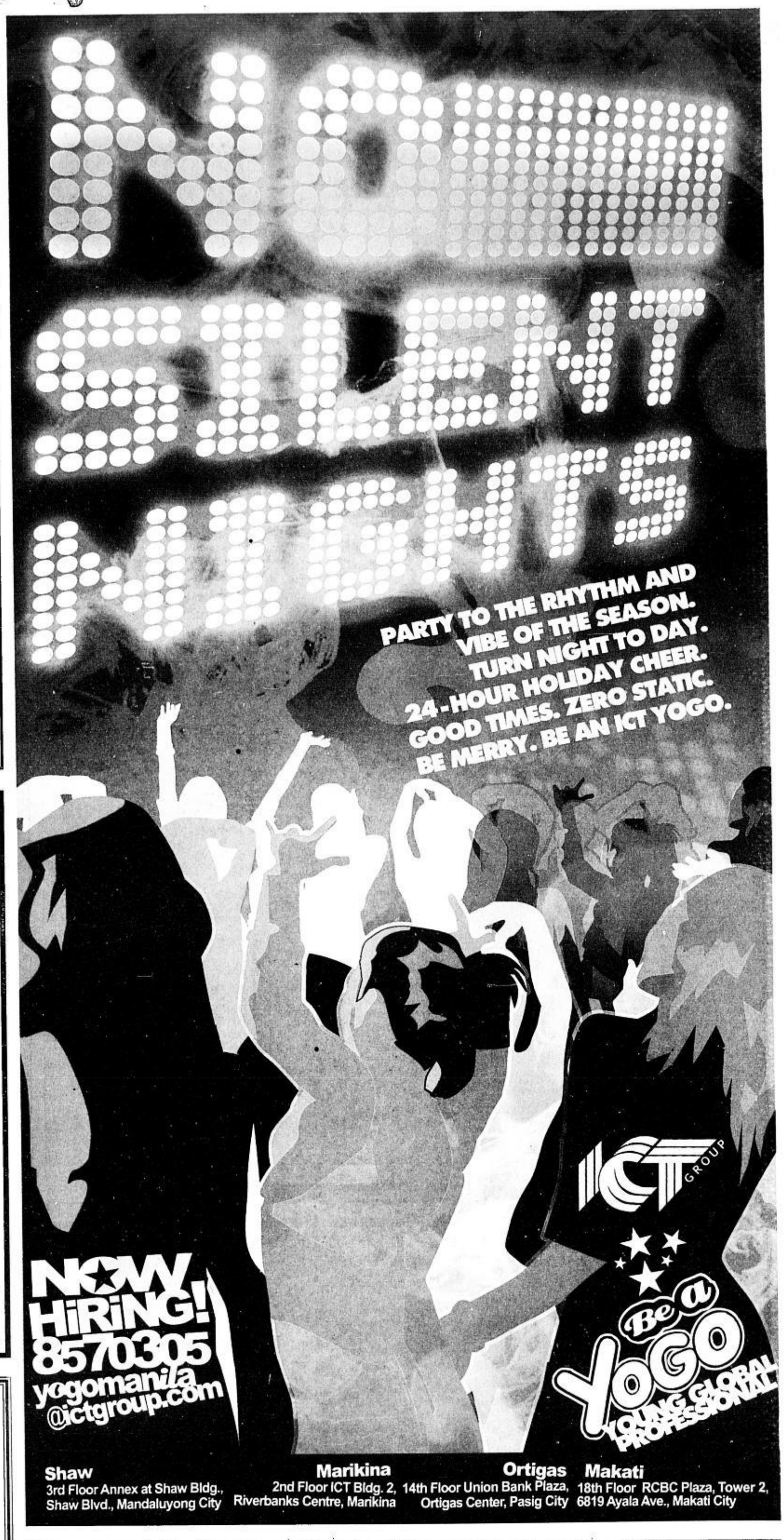

A Reputable Japanese Trading Company is in URGENT need of the following:

1. Female In-house Sales Assistant

Qualifications:

- College graduate
- Experience in Brokerage and import/export related field would be an advantage
- Computer literate
- Can work under minimal supervision
- Must be flexible and Hardworking
- With good oral and written communication skills

2. Female Accounting Clerk

Qualifications:

- Any four-year business course preferably with Accounting background
- Computer literate
- Can work under minimal supervision
- Must be flexible and hardworking
- With good oral and written communication skills

Interested applicants may apply in person at the:

PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT
Unit 2003, 20th Floor Antel Corporate Centre
No. 121 Valero Street, Salcedo Village
Makati City, Philippines

(Please bring your Curriculum Vitae, transcript of records and recent 2x2 photo)

WANTED IMMEDIATELY

PLC / SCADA PROGRAMMERS / TECHNICIANS / ENGINEERS

- EE / ECE / COE; Industrial Technicians / Electricians
- Familiar with PLC's and HMI's (Any Brand) preferable S7-300 / Wonderware

PROJECT ENGINEERS

- BS EE / BS ME / Male or Female (Preferably Licensed)
- 5 years and above experience
- Familiar with Electrical Design & Construction (Commercial / Industrial Buildings) for EE
- Familiar with Instruments Piping / Tubings & Installation for ME

Note: BMS / Utilities / Facilities experience preferred.
We give above Industry Standard Salary, Commission and Best Training

Apply in Person or Send Resumé to:

Industrial Controls Corporation
926-928 Mega Plaza Building, ADB Avenue cor. Garnet St.,
Ortigas Center, Pasig City Tel # 687-4814 to 15 Fax # 687-2443
www.IndustrialControlsCorp.com

MANAGING DIRECTOR

SEEDFINANCE Corporation provides wholesale loans and technical assistance to local cooperatives, rural banks, and NGOs to support their **microfinance operations.**

We currently need a **MANAGING DIRECTOR** who shall be responsible for the day-to-day activities of the organization. He/she will be in charge of: the overall management of the wholesale lending operations; implementation of business/strategic plans; development and implementation of operational and administrative policies and procedures; fund-sourcing and investment generation; leadership and personnel management; board and other stakeholders relations; corporate planning and marketing.

To qualify, the candidate must possess the following: strong banking and/ or finance background; extensive experience in microfinance, retail or wholesale; working knowledge of human resource administration, marketing and corporate planning; social development orientation; and honesty, integrity, and dignity in work.

He/she must be: 35 years old or older; a servant leader committed to democratic and participatory management; a Filipino citizen; ready to be based in Metro Manila and willing to travel extensively.

The salary for this position shall be PhP50,000 (negotiable).

Please send your application and resume by post or courier to SEEDFINANCE Corporation, Suite 49 PARC House Bldg., 227 EDSA Greenhills, Mandaluyong City, 1556, via email to **new_sfmd@yahoo.com**, or fax to telefax 02-7264258. Deadline for applications is on January 14, 2008. All applications will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Only short-listed applicants will be contacted.

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JOB Market

SALESPERSONS– URGENTLY NEEDED
With previous sales experience for: Manila, Luzon, Visayas
Pleasing personality. Previous sales experience preferred. College graduate College level or High School graduate. Female/Male 20-32 y/o.
MICROSCOPES SALESMEN – M/F, 23-35 y/o, knowledge of microscopes w/1 yr. sales experience
REGISTERED PHARMACIST– Female, 23-35 y/o, with 3 years work experience, with BFAD REG. exp.
MARKETING SECRETARY– Female. 22-30 y/o, college graduate, fluent in English experienced in correspondence with foreign suppliers.
Applicants need to be in Manila for interview or send resumé or apply in person at.
ASSOCIATED DRUGS, INC. – a 60-year old established company
2222 Taft Avenue Malate Manila Between Quirino & Vito Cruz LRT Stations
Afternoon only 1 to 5 pm Monday to Friday or E-mail: info@asdrug.com Tel# 525-3161

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- graduate of a business course or equivalent
- with excellent quantitative and analytical skills
- able to multi-task
- proficient in Microsoft Office applications
- with at least 1 year related experience
- preferably with experience in project management
- 22 to 30 years old

Applicants may submit their resumé and TOR copy to

careers@teamlbc.com.ph

or at

HR DEPARTMENT
LBC Express, Inc.
General Aviation Center, Domestic Airport Compound, Pasay City

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THE AXA
"I want to be part of a global powerhouse"
PLAN.

AXA Philippines, the country's fastest-growing life insurer, is in need of

Financial Executives
For Cavite Area - Imus, Gen. Trias, & Naic
For Quezon City - Ortigas, Pasig, Quezon Ave., & Edsa Congressional
For Marilao, Bulacan and Malinta, Valenzuela

A basic salary, superior compensation package and travel opportunities await qualified candidates

QUALIFICATIONS:

- 22 to 35 years old
- College graduate of any 4-year course
- Fresh graduates are also encouraged to apply
- Professional sales experience in real estate, pharmaceutical, telecommunication, stock trading or insurance is an advantage

Please bring an updated resume with recent photo and personally apply at

Cafe Breton - The Podium
118 The Podium ADB Ave., Ortigas Ctr., Mandaluyong City
Dec. 05, 2007, Wed.; 1PM - 5 PM

Microtel Inns and Suites
Eagle Ridge & Residential Estates, Gen. Trias, Cavite
Dec. 07, 2007, Friday; 8AM - 3PM

Mocha Blends - Marilao
JM Commercial Bldg., Abangan Norte, Marilao Bulacan
Dec. 07, 2007, Friday; 8AM - 3PM

You may send also your resume to ba.recruitment@axa.com.ph
For Inquiries, call (02) 885 0101 loc 1238 or (02) 887 2079

AXA LIFE INSURANCE & INVESTMENTS
Metrobank Group
Be Life Confident

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bayan TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Bayan Telecommunications, Inc.

is a leading provider of telecommunications and data services in the Philippines. In Bayan, we strive to make a difference by offering products and services that bring out the best in the lives of Filipinos. We challenge our employees to grow professionally as we improve the lives of our customers, while enjoying their careers in a fun and *kakaiba* way.

Bayan is currently in need of highly dynamic and self-motivated individuals to fill in the following positions:

SYSTEMS ANALYST/ PROGRAMMER

Requirements:
- Highly analytical & has good logic formation skills
- Documentation skills (Able to capture & document Technical & Functional Specifications)
- Good communication & decision-making skills
- Knowledge and skills in PL / Tools, Visual C# 8.0, VB Net 7 1& 8 0, MS SQL 2005, ASP.NET / XML, Java SE, Oracle, DB2, Sharepoint, FrontPage / Flash, Photoshop or equivalent
- Functional & Technical Troubleshooting skills on FMS 11i modules: General Ledger, Accounts Payables, Purchasing, Inventory, Fixed Assets, Daily Business Intelligence, Enterprise Planning & Budgetting, Accounts Receivables (a plus), Cash Management (a plus)
- Development skills on the If. (at least 2 years experience): Oracle Reports Builder 10G & below, Oracle Forms Builder 10G & below, PL/SQL programming, Discoverer, ASP.net
- Must have basic knowledge on Unix / AIX, database design & oracle RDBMS

IT ANALYST / SPECIALIST
(Change Management & Quality Assurance)

Requirements:
- Able to develop systems and procedures that will result in new and creative solutions to all IT initiatives.
- Able to apply analytical skills toward problem definition, data gathering, system modeling, validation, solution implementation and monitoring for a varied set of problems.
- Able to conceptualize, establish and prepare systems or tools for the improvement of Change Management & Productivity Services activities, integrity and presentation.
- Able to enumerate standards in measuring quality of IT products and services.
- Able to provide needed support to continually improve IT policies and procedures.
- Able to define role, structure and operations of IT Division.
- Able to link corporate business needs with IT strategic plans.
- Able to perform excellent oral and written communications.
- Able to design & organize systems & workflow across work teams for maximum efficiency.
- Working knowledge in the following areas: Basic Telecommunications, Basic Accounting, Project Management principles, practice and tools, Business process engineering/improvement/re-engineering
- Requires minimum supervision; dedicated, flexible, resourceful and organized

SYSTEMS ANALYST / DEVELOPER

Requirements:
- Able to understand user objectives, processes, operations & requirements.
- Able to translate, articulate and expound user requirements to a form that can be easily translated to system specification.
- Able to write functional specifications.
- Able to identify scope and impact of solution – what processes, programs, operations will be affected.
- Able to identify advantages and disadvantages of different solutions.
- Able to explain systems or technical matters in terms of business language that users can understand.
- Able to match user requirements vis-à-vis existing system functionality.
- Able to maintain expert knowledge of available systems.
- Able to design and document program logic using standard tools such as pseudocode, function chart, etc.
- Able to write programs using standard languages.
- Able to design and create tables and indexes.
- Able to document test plan, test cases and test results.
- Able to analyze cause, effect and solution to system problems.
- Able to perform coordination and project management tasks.
- Working knowledge in the following areas: Basic telecommunications, Basic Accounting and Basic Project Management
- Programming language: DotNet (pref VB), VB6, Oracle Forms and reports, PL SQL, Perl, Shell script, Foxpro
- Database: Oracle, SQL server, Access
- Operating System: Microsoft, Unix, Linux

IT ANALYST / SPECIALIST
(Office & Productivity Services)

Requirements:
- Microsoft Certified – familiar with desktop software applications (i.e. web browser and database tools)
- Knowledge and skills in Sharepoint 2003 or MOSS 07
- Oral and written communication skills
- Able to analyze, understand and write simple programs/scripts
- Able to think "out-of-the-box"
- Able to apply analytical skills
- Able to work well within a team environment
- Resourceful and can work efficiently even under pressure

Interested applicants may send their updated resumes with cover letter to
Recruitment Department, Bayan Telecommunications, Inc., Bayan Corporate Center, Maginhawa corner Malingap Sts., Teachers Village East, Diliman, Quezon City
Or e-mail it to careers@bayan.com.ph

WANTED IMMEDIATELY
Willing to be assigned in Meycauayan, Bulacan

- **DRAFTSMAN**
  - Knowledge in technical drawing.
  - Not more than 35 years old
- **SPRAYMAN**
  - Preferably with experience in powder coating
- **MECHANICAL ENGINEER**
  - Male, familiar with technical drawing
  - Knowledgeable in maintenance of machine
  - Not more than 35 years old
  - Knowledgeable in computer software like Autocadd
- **ACCOUNTING CLERK**
  - Female, single 23-30 years old
  - Commerce graduate Major in Accounting
  - Knowledgeable in computer software and general accounting

Please send your Comprehensive Resumé to:
c/o Genesis Integrated Projects
Bo. Perez, Meycauayan, Bulacan

A Makati-based company needs the following:

OSP SUPPORT ENGRS.

Male, 26 to 32 years old. Graduate of Civil, Electrical or Electronic Communication Engineering Course (Licensed an advantage). Must have a working knowledge in OSP Cable and in preparation of cost estimates. BOQ and Bidding Computations, Material Control & Project Monitoring. Minimum of 2 years experience. With Cad experience and can work under minimum supervision and is flexible. Willing to be assigned anywhere in the Philippines.

OSP SITE INSPECTORS

Male. Between 28 to 35 years old. Engineering graduate or any related courses. Extensive experience in Electrical & Telecom (OSP, PDS, ISP & LV) supervision, documentation & control. Knowledge in OSP, Bills of Quantity, telecom construction civil works, aerial and underground. Can work with minimum supervision and can work long hours. Flexible. Willing to be assigned anywhere in the Philippines.

Please submit your sealed resumé and other credentials indicating your desired salary to:

hrrecruitement@yahoo.com

The Human Resource Manager
MCPO Box No. 2060
Makati City

Client centric selling

MANSMITH AND Fielders, Inc will conduct a two-day seminar on Client Centric Selling on Dec. 4, 8:30 to 5:30 p.m at Mandarin Oriental Hotel, Makati City. This seminar introduces updated selling philosophies and processes that address the rise of the "active buyer." It provides solutions to selling issues in the new environ; relegates inapplicable old methods to the archives while validating and enhancing continuing effective practices. This also helps participants understand the buyer's thought process. To execute the client-centric process properly, specific skills are identified in each step of the process. Participants are then treated to sessions of skill points upgrading by allowing them to immediately try out and practice the newfound skill seeds through some exercises.

The facilitator further reinforces this skill upgrade effort by way of field experience-sharing, relating selling stories/ examples and providing tips. Nowadays, customers know what they want. They have access to information. They espouse opinions. They even have deal-killer biases. More so, they always expect to be satisfied with any product or service they acquire.

For registration or other inquiries, call Alice Torres or Gail Sacluti at 722-2318 / 727-7142 or email us at info@mansmith.net.

JOB Market VISIT US AT www.jobmarketonline.com

Maxicare
Healthcare for those you care about.

Career Opportunities

Maxicare Healthcare Corporation, a top HMO serving some of the country's best employers of choice with over a quarter-of-a-million membership nationwide, through our impressive roster of over 8,000 Affiliated Specialists, Fellows and Diplomates and more than 330 hospitals and clinics.

Ultimately, it is only at Maxicare where you experience..... ***"healthcare at its finest."***

We want you if you are looking for a competitive compensation and benefits package.

For the following positions:

Corporate Accounts Officers

- Marketing or Management discipline from a reputable institution
- With pleasing personality
- at least 2 year experience in Sales in the industry
- Extensive experience in key accounts management with proven strong track record in sales
- Excellent negotiation and presentation skills
- Male or Female, 25 to 31 years of age
- Can establish good rapport with internal and external clients
- Computer literate excel and power point
- Good team player and can work under minimal supervision

Sales Manager

- Marketing or Management discipline from a reputable institution
- With pleasing personality
- at least 3 years experience in Sales, in an HMO industry
- Extensive experience in key accounts management
- With strong leadership and managerial skills
- Excellent negotiation and presentation skills
- Holding same position at least 1 year
- Male or Female, 27 to 35 years of age

Customer Care Representative

- Preferably medical allied course graduate (except nursing)
- Exposure in an HMO is an advantage
- Good communication skills
- Willing to do field work
- Excellent interpersonal and customer service orientation
- With pleasing personality
- Resourceful and team player
- Male 21 to 30, years of age

Assistant Manager for Primary Care Center

- Graduate of Medicine, with Internal Medicine specialty
- With pleasing personality
- Willing to be assigned at Makati Medical Center, Medical City and St. Lukes Center
- at least 2 years experience in an HMO industry
- Male or Female, 27 to 35 years of age
- Excellent interpersonal and customer service orientation

Please send comprehensive resume to:
julie.llanes@maxicare.com.ph
For more career opportunities, visit our website www.maxicare.com.ph

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The **COMMISSION ON FILIPINOS OVERSEAS** is accepting applications for the position of:

(1) ACCOUNTANT III
Item # CFO-OEOB-A3-37-2006
SG-18

Qualifications:
- CPA
- Experience in government agency preferred but not necessary
- Above average proficiency in oral and written English
- Very good analytical skills
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office applications
- Highly motivated to accomplish tasks
- Very good interpersonal skills

Interested applicants may submit their comprehensive resumé, transcript of records, and certificate of previous employment, if any to:

Administrative and Finance Division
COMMISSION ON FILIPINOS OVERSEAS
Citigold Center, 1345 Quirino Ave.
cor. Osmeña Highway, Manila
Email: afo@cfo.gov.ph

For more information, pls. call 561-8317 or 561-8321 (loc. 500 & 502)

FOR IMMEDIATE HIRING

Office Manager to work for a large professional organization with at least 2 years experience, 30's, female

Send bio-data in a sealed envelope to:
Donna Sarrosa, M.D.

Philippine Dermatological Society
Rm. 1015 South Tower, CHBC
St. Luke's Medical Center
E. Rodriguez Avenue, Q.C. 1102

NOW HIRING

MUSIC TEACHER

For Elementary Level

Submit credentials and application to the Office of Student and Personnel Services (OSPS), Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

MARIST SCHOOL
50 Champagnat Ave.,
Marikina Heights, Marikina City,
Tel. No. 9420526 loc. 232

FOR IMMEDIATE HIRING

A growing and progressive studio that offers art, design services and provides product development, is in need of an

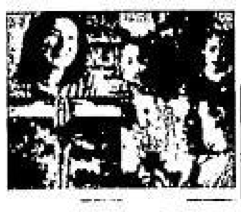
ARTIST

- must have a college degree in Graphic Arts, Fine Arts or any related field.
- must have excellent drawing skills
- knowledge in Adobe Photoshop, Corel Draw is required.

Please submit a resumé and samples of works to:
769 Maria Clara St., Barangay Plainview, Mandaluyong City
Contact Bon at 534-4073 or 534-4119
Mondays to Fridays, 9:00 AM to 7:30 PM

JOB Market
Read it every Sunday with the Philippine Daily Inquirer.
OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS BUT ONCE.

Wyeth



Leading the Way to a Healthier World

If challenges, fun, travel and excellence excite you, then these job opportunities in the world of nutritional manufacturing await you!!

We are a leading global nutritional and pharmaceutical company and offer compensation and benefits package above industry level to the successful candidates.

PRODUCTION DIVISION

Production Operator (200 positions open)

Function:
Responsible for safely operating and maintaining of the various processing machines and systems involved in the manufacturing of infant formula.

Qualifications:
- Trade/ vocational school graduate or College graduate or equivalent
- Minimum of 2 years related technical experience
- Able to perform full operational diagnostics and minor equipment repairs and maintenance.
- Willing to work in shifting schedule.

Production Supervisor (13 positions open)

Function:
Responsible for overseeing the manufacturing operations of his assigned section/s during the work shift.

Qualifications:
- Graduate of a 4 –year Bachelor Science program (Engineering / Sciences)
- Minimum of 5 years experience in manufacturing operations & 2 years in People Management role
- Has knowledge in forecasting, planning/scheduling & time management
- Must exhibit strong leadership and communication skills

Process Engineer – Packaging (1 position open)

Function:
Provides assistance to the Packaging Manager in ensuring the optimization of the packaging section.

Qualifications:
- Graduate of a 4 –year Bachelor Science program (Engineering / Sciences)
- Minimum of 2 - 3 years related work experience
- Experience in Statistical Process Control
- Familiar with automation technology.

ENGINEERING DIVISION

Utilities Engineer (3 positions open)

Function:
Responsible for overseeing the operations and maintenance scheduling of various utility equipment.

Qualifications:
- Must be a graduate of Mechanical/ Electrical Engineering. Must be licensed.
- Must have at least four (4) years combined experience in HVAC, refrigeration, air conditioning system, chillers, WWTP, air compressors and Boiler Machine
- Knowledge on compressed air system, and air balancing, Building Management System

Process Maintenance Supervisor

Function:
Oversees the effective implementation of preventive maintenance program of electro-mechanical aspect of equipment for the following areas including, Cleaning In-Place (CIP) system, Compounding, Dryers, Evaporators, Power room and Canning and Sachet lines.

Qualifications:
- BS Mechanical/ Electrical Engineering or any other Engineering related course, licensed
- Three (3) years experience in people management
- Broad knowledge in the operation and maintenance of milk powder processing and packaging operations.
- Knowledge on utilities operation and maintenance, Programmable Logic and Control (PLC), electro-mechanical repair and maintenance.

Preventive Maintenance Analyst (2 positions open)

Function:
Responsible for developing and monitoring the Plant's Preventive and Predictive Maintenance Program.

Qualifications:
- Engineering graduate or trade school graduate
- Minimum of 2 years experience in Preventive Maintenance
- Has knowledge in PM planning scheduling, work order auditing, root- cause analysis, troubleshooting and conditioning monitoring

Mechanical Technician (2 positions open)

Function:
Responsible for the proper execution of preventive, predictive and corrective maintenance of process equipment to ensure its smooth operation

Qualifications:
- Two (2) years experience as mechanic in any industrial manufacturing plants;
- Adequate knowledge in trouble shooting and repair works of process equipment using Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) and sanitary design techniques.
- Machining works, basic electrical basic instrumentation, powder process flow, tin tech, and basic welding works.

QUALITY DIVISION

Chemistry Laboratory Analyst

Function:
Performs laboratory testing for in-process materials/products and at least raw material testing and proximate analysis of bulk and finished products.

Qualifications:
- BS Chemistry or BS Chemical Engineering. Must be a licensed Chemist
- At least one (1) year experience in gravimetric and volumetric analyses
- Proven proficiency in analytical work in at least two (2) of the defined laboratory instruments such as: UV-VIS, Mojonnier Tester, NIR or equivalent, IR/Fluorometers, HPLC
- Computer literate

Microbiologist

Function:
Primarily responsible for auditing batch records and related documents, renders general documentation assistance to the section.

Qualifications:
- Graduate of technical course – BS Chemical Engineering, BS Chemistry, BS Industrial Pharmacy, or related courses.
- At least three (3) years experience in production or quality assurance of food or pharmaceutical plant
- Knowledge in statistical applications and analysis
- Can conduct critical review of test reports, manufacturing documents and product formulations.

QA Inspector

Function:
Performs sampling, inspection,and physical, chemical testing of any packaging materials, Work-in Process, in-hour premises and finished products.

Qualifications:
- BS Chemistry, BS Chemical Engineering, Pharmacy, or any allied technical course. Preferably with PRC license
- With at least one (1) year experience as QA Inspector/Technician in pharmaceutical or food industry
- Can handle laboratory wares and equipment
- Knowledge in statistical applications/analysis and operation of analytical instruments

Qualified applicants are requested to send their updated résumé to the given postal/email address:

Canlubang office: HRD Department
Wyeth Philippines, Inc.
Bo. Pittland, Canlubang Industrial Estate,
Cabuyao, Laguna

Email address: recruitment@wyeth.com / deguzmad2@wyeth.com

Previous applicants need not apply. We will only reply to qualified applicants.

PHILIPPINE DIVERSIFIED DEVELOPERS CORPORATION

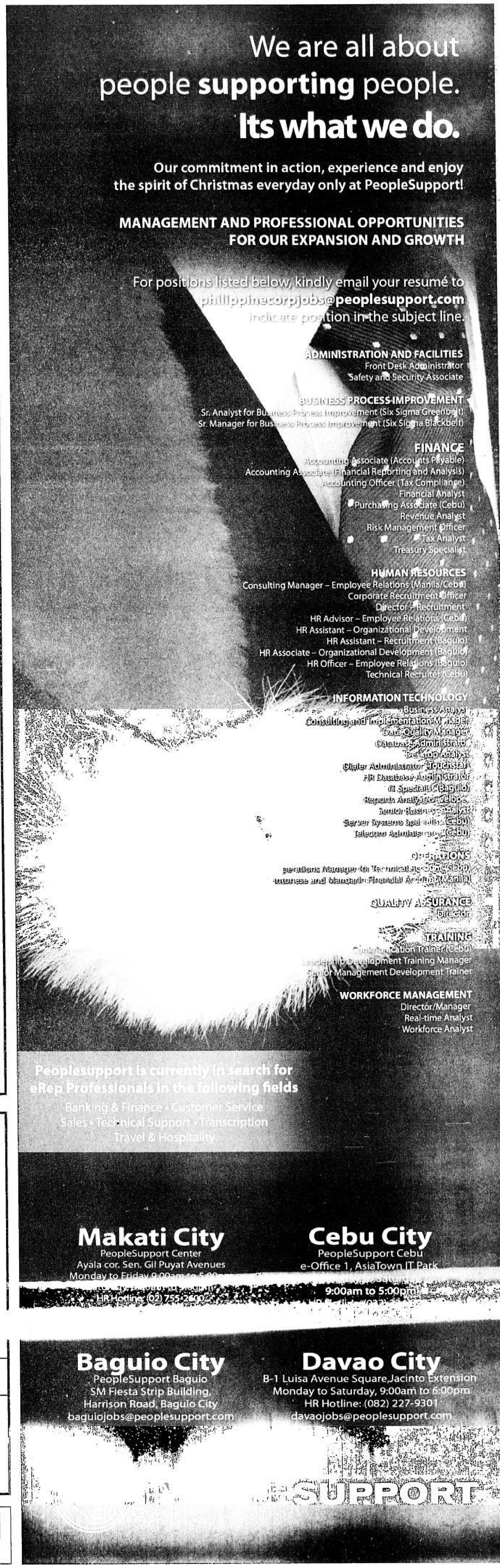
A fast growing property developer with over decades of developing hectares of land into affordable premier subdivisions. An arm of FGF Group of Companies with established track record in rural banking, agriculture, financing and real estate industry is looking for a qualified professional to fill the **MARKETING MANAGER** position with the following qualifications:

- ✓ Male / Female not more than 40 years old
- ✓ Marketing Graduate or equivalent
- ✓ Master's Degree holder is an advantage but not necessary
- ✓ Computer literate and internet savvy
- ✓ Excellent verbal, written and presentation skills
- ✓ Experience in formulating and evaluating marketing programs both strategically and analytically
- ✓ Must have at least 2 yrs background experience n
  ust be willing to work in Bacolod City

Send your application letter, resume with picture and transcript of records to the following address:

THE MANAGER
Philippine Diversified Developers Corporation
3rd Floor Carmen Bldg., Lizares Avenue
Bacolod City, Neg. Occidental
email add: Philippinediversified@yahoo.com
Tel. Nos. (034) 433-1860 / 709-8080 c/o Ailene

"Exciting career opportunities awaits the deserving applicant"



Inquirer BRe
Inquire about the JobMarket package at 897-8808 loc 514.
JOB Market
Find a career in here

THE WORLD BANK OFFICE MANILA

Requires a

Communications Officer

The World Bank Group seeks to help the Philippines improve the lives of its citizens through sustainable growth and greater social inclusion. Fiscal stability and public institutions that serve the common good are critical to these objectives. Our strategy is to support *Islands of Good Governance* in government agencies, local governments, and dynamic sectors that demonstrate how improved accountability and service delivery serve a greater number of the people.

General Description: The **Communications Officer** is expected to support the above strategy and his/her main accountability is to plan, develop, and implement effective communications strategies that would result in greater development effectiveness of the World Bank's support in the country through better awareness and understanding of development issues relevant to the Philippines. The successful candidate will join a small highly motivated and professional group of communications specialists in the World Bank's Manila Office. He/she will be working under the responsibility of a Senior External Relations Officer. The position is for a two-year term basis, subject to one year probationary period, with possibility of renewal.

Specific Duties:

- Plan, design, implement, monitor and evaluate communication strategies around specific development objectives and/or issues, lending projects and Analytical and Advisory Activities (AAA), events and other activities of relevance to the Bank, in coordination with other teams within or outside the Bank. These strategies should contribute to the dialogue with major stakeholders and to the Bank's broader strategy development and position on development issues.
- Initiate and sustain effective professional relationships with key internal and/or external constituencies (including the media, civil society, NGOs, academia, businesses, government agencies, parliamentarians, etc.). Identify opportunities for and forges strategic partnerships both inside and outside the Bank to improve dialogue and outreach and to strengthen the Bank's overall effectiveness.
- Write and/or oversee the preparation, production and dissemination of both routine and complex outreach products that promote the strategic and timely flow of information and key messages about the Bank, its policies and operations to key internal and external audiences. Determine the types of information and appropriate communications activities and tools to address relevant issues or problems of specific target audiences.
- Monitor and analyze current events and public and press opinion with a view to risk management. Provide advice to managers, staff and clients on trends, news developments, or changing/unexpected circumstances that may impact the Bank and its work, and help to determine appropriate strategic responses to address them.
- Routinely address both internal and external target audiences on Bank policies and positions that are sometimes complex and/or sensitive, via media briefings, conferences, etc. Routinely give presentations and/or represent the Bank, as needed.
- Give direction to, supervise, and monitor and evaluate the work program of the External Relations Team, as needed.
- Work implies frequent interaction with the Country Director, program team leaders, communications team, counterpart staff and representatives of the Bank's key external constituencies (media, academics, government, NGOs, business, international institutions, policy makers, congress, and civil society), counterparts in the communications job family within and across regions, networks, external and internal communications functions, including other units integral to the delivery of business objectives.

Selection Criteria:

- Master's degree in any of the following fields: Economics, Communications, Journalism, International Relations Political Science, Public Affairs, or other related field, with a minimum of 5 years experience in one or more professional disciplines, or a Bachelor's degree in a relevant field and 10 years of relevant experience.
- Knowledge of and practical experience in full range of communications approaches, tools and methodologies essential to planning, executing, and monitoring communications strategies – e.g., campaign management, media operations, social marketing, opinion research, audience outreach, message targeting, etc. Ability to plan and successfully implement a comprehensive communications program in support of defined objectives.
- Proven ability to identify, network with, and strategically engage with diverse groups, in particular with the development community, including staff and members of the legislative branch, academics, think tanks, coalitions and advocacy networks, and other opinion leaders in the country.
- In-depth knowledge and understanding of social, political, and economic development issues in East Asia and the Philippines.
- Demonstrated political awareness and ability to diplomatically handle sensitive situations with target audiences and to otherwise cultivate effective, productive client relationships/partnerships.
- Effective interpersonal skills; proven experience in working as both a leader and a member of team. Proven planning and organizational skills.
- Strong conceptual and research/analytical skills, with the ability to think strategically and rapidly analyze and integrate diverse information from varied sources into conclusions and recommendations.
- Excellent oral and written communication and presentational skills in English and Filipino.
- Strong computer skills; ability to use standard Bank technology packages, e.g., Word, Lotus Notes, PowerPoint, Internet, Excel, etc.
- Good understanding of the Bank, its policies and operations, preferred.

Please send your application letter, with a comprehensive resume with details of your work experience, academic records, recent photo, references (at least three names with full contact details) not later than **December 14, 2007. Only applicants who will be short-listed will be called upon for interview.** Send the above to:

The Human Resource Officer
P.O. Box # 300 c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer
5th Floor, Building B, SM Megamall
EDSA, Mandaluyong City

PhilHealth
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Be part of a young and dynamic corporation which provides accessible, affordable and quality health care for Filipinos through a viable and progressive social health insurance.

VACANT POSITIONS

Corporate Planning Department

Division Chief IV (SG 24) item no. 07-00-0002
- Relevant educational background; with Masters Degree
- At least 4 years of experience involving management and supervision
- At least 24 hours of training in management and supervision
- Career Service Professional Eligible

Planning Officer III (SG 18) item no. 53-03-0022/53-03-0026
- Bachelor 's Degree relevant to the job
- At least 2 years of relevant experience
- At least 8 hours of relevant training
- Career Service Professional Eligible

Planning Officer II (SG 15) item no. 53-02-0002/53-02-0006
- Bachelor 's Degree relevant to the job
- At least 1 year of relevant experience
- At least 4 hours of relevant training
- Career Service Professional Eligible

Corporate Planning Analyst A (SG 13) item no. 54-01-0006
- Bachelor 's Degree relevant to the job
- Experience and Training: None required
- Career Service Professional Eligible

Planning Officer I (SG 11) item no. 53-01-0001/53-01-0002
- Bachelor 's Degree relevant to the job
- Experience and Training: None required
- Career Service Professional Eligible

For interested applicants, please personally apply or send your resume with picture and other credentials to HUMAN RESOURCE DEPARTMENT - PHILIPPINE HEALTH INSURANCE CORPORATION - U-1507 Citystate Centre, 709 Shaw Blvd., Brgy. Oranbo, Pasig City.

Deadline for submission of applications is on December 7, 2007.

Urgently Needed!
1. Sales/Mktg. Manager
2. Sales/Mktg. Rep.
3. Accounting Staff

College Graduate
Tel: (02) 550-4807
Email:cpil@pldtdsl.net

WE ARE A FAST-GROWING CALL CENTER COMPANY & WE URGENTLY NEED PERSONNEL FOR OUR ORTIGAS BRANCH:

(3) ENCODERS
(5) CALL AGENTS

For interested parties, please submit resume & apply in person from 8am onwards at #3 Missouri St., Golden Meadows, Brgy. Mayamot, Antipolo City (Near Sta. Lucia Mall Cainta)

Managing emotions at the workplace

AS YOU FACE A larger workload, tighter deadlines and greater demands on personal time, you're likely to find yourself in situations where you need help identifying and managing emotions in the workplace. American Management Association will conduct a seminar on Managing Emotions at the Workplace on Dec. 13 and 14 at Mandarin Oriental, Makati. For inquiries, call 7596680 and look for Jasmin or email to jrunez@imperialconsulting.com.ph

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AN ARCHITECTURAL COMPANY
IS SEEKING FOR:

(5) SENIOR ARCHITECTS
- PROFICIENT IN AUTOCADD AND DETAILED DESIGN DRAWINGS.
- MINIMUM 15 YEARS EXPERIENCE.

(8) JUNIOR ARCHITECTS
- PROFICIENT IN AUTOCADD.
- EXPERIENCED IN WORKING DRAWINGS.
- MINIMUM 5 YEARS EXPERIENCE.

(3) 3D VISUALIZERS
- ARCHITECT, EXPERIENCED IN ANIMATION AND STILL IMAGE RENDERINGS.
- PROFICIENT IN AUTOCADD, 3DSMAX, SKETCH UP, VIZ, FLASH, PHOTOSHOP.
- KNOWLEDGE IN OTHER 3D MODELLING ND RENDERING SOFTWARE IS AN ADVANTAGE.
- MINIMUM 5 YRS. EXPERIENCE

(5) QUANTITY SURVEYORS
- CIVIL ENGINEERS
- EXPERIENCED ON HORIZONTAL AND VERTICAL STRUCTURES.
- PROFICIENT IN AUTOCADD AND OTHER RELATED SOFTWARES.
- MINIMUM 15 YEARS EXPERIENCE.

(2) MASTER PLANNERS
- ARCHITECTS
- PROFICIENT IN AUTOCADD.
- MINIMUM 15 YEARS EXPERIENCE.

(2) SENIOR PROJECT MANAGERS
- CIVIL ENGINEERS
- EXPERIENCED ON HORIZONTAL AND VERTICAL STRUCTURES. PROFICIENT IN PRIMAVERA, AUTOCADD AND OTHER RELATED SOFTWARES.
- MINIMUM 15 YEARS EXPERIENCE.

(2) EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
- WITH ARCHITECTURAL BACKGROUND
- MINIMUM 5 YEARS EXPERIENCE.

SEND YOUR CURRICULUM VITAE TO:
jabalarc@yahoo.com

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protemps

Protemps, INC. A dynamic and progressive service contractor provides outsourcing and temporary staffing for a multi-national and local companies invites all aspiring and determined personnel to explore job opportunities with us.

IMMEDIATE HIRING

ACCOUNTING CLERKS
- Female/Male not more than 28yrs old
- Accountancy grad or any 4 yr business course
- Computer Literate

COMPUTER TECHNICIANS/IT STAFF
- Male not more than 28 yrs old
- Computer Engineering/IT graduate
- With knowledge in troubleshooting

DATA ENCODERS
- Male/Female not more than 28 yrs old
- Graduate of any 4 yr course
- Proficient in MS Excel
- Typing speed: 35-40 wpm

COMPANY DRIVERS
- Male not more than 35 yrs of age
- Preferably with experience in the said field
- To be assigned in Parañaque
- Restrictions: 123

ELECTRICAL/CIVIL/ELECTRONICS COMMUNICATION ENGINEERS
- Female/Male (25- 30 yrs old)
- Civil Engineer with License
- With experience in Construction Site & QS/QA Works

GENERAL CLERK/OFFICE STAFF
- Female/Male not more than 26 yrs old
- Graduate of any 4 yr course
- Encodes and prepares all relative general admin & purchasing docs
- With good comm. skills

HELP DESKS/TEL. OPERATORS
- Female not more than 28 yrs old
- Graduate of any 4 yr course
- W/ good oral and communication skills
- Computer literate

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- Willing to work on a rotating shift

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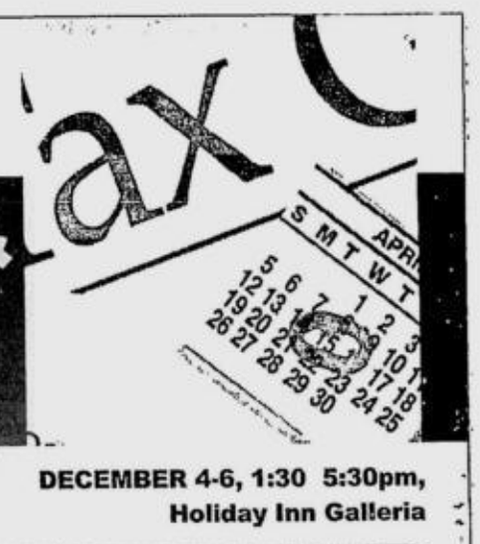

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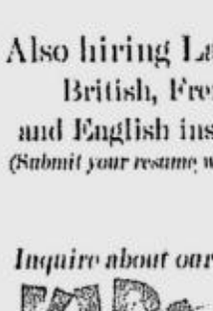

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Numbers to help you succeed in the workplace

By Roel A. Andag
Contributor

NUMBERS HELP PEOPLE understand what is happening around them. Numbers help express and execute ideas better. Numbers can help measure experiences. Here are numbers from different disciplines that can help you excel in the world of work.

Communication

Effective communication is a key leadership skill. You may be gifted with verbal precision—using the right words at the right time—but this gift is useless when your speech and body language are not in harmony with each other. While voice tonality accounts for 38 percent of your communication, body language represents 55 percent. Your choice of words adds in a mere seven percent. Communicate with impact by synchronizing your speech with tone and body language.

Presentations and conversations become dull after 20 minutes—the maximum length of time a person can stay focused. Rapid talking is not advisable though. People comfortably hear from 150 to 160 words per minute. Pace yourself well. After two days, your audience will retain only 20 percent of what they heard. Aid memory retention by making your every utterance count: use keywords, visual aids and exercises.

Time management

Only 20 percent of your activities account for 80 percent of your productivity. Inversely, 80 percent of your activities contribute only 20 percent to your productivity. The unproductive bulk is spent on time wasters such as gossip, YouTube, Friendster and other distractions. Stop wasting time by setting goals and planning ahead. If you resolve to always come early to the office, remember that it takes all of 21 days of daily practice to form a new habit pattern.

First impression

Thirty seconds is all it takes to establish your first impression. Within those precious seconds, 13 judgments about you are made. Poor image can kill your career. Impressions management is indeed important.

An impressed supervisor will probably tell his superiors and colleagues about your outstanding performance. A disappointed boss will certainly relay his frustration to as many persons he can reach. In customer care, it is estimated that bad service reports outnumber good service reports by as many as 5:1. Translated to impressions, these could be termed "criticisms versus praises." With the help of technology, bad news travels at the speed of light.

In consumer behavior, personal recommendations remain the most trusted information.

Good or bad, others are bound to know about you. Through word of mouth, it will take only three personality types to spread your reputation. They are, as described in Malcolm Gladwell's book "The Tipping Point"—the connector who is respected in broad networks, the maven who analyzes information and shares his knowledge with other people for better decision-making, and the salesman who has excellent people skills. Reaching enough number of people, these three movers will be able to build a "tipping point" that will decide the fate of your career.

Lifelong employability

Good reviews are not an assurance of your staying power. For more than a hundred reasons including outsourcing, redundancy and obsolescence of competency, 100 percent of jobs are mortal. What is important is lifelong employability not lifetime employment. A lifetime of professional desirability will be attained with continuous retooling. Of course, attitude—towards yourself, towards others and towards your work—makes 100.

(The author is an independent training and communication consultant. Feedback at success.system1@gmail.com)

Workers react differently to success and failure

TORONTO—EXCEEDING expectations can drive some employees to do a worse job next time, while others must see changes in their performance to stay on track, according to a recent study.

The study, published in the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, showed that people in the workplace react to success or failure in surprisingly different ways depending on how they assess their own abilities.

Those with a "fixed" belief system think their abilities don't change, and they react badly to a change in performance—even if they are actually doing better.

"People are driven to feel that they can predict and control their outcomes.

So when their performance turns out to violate their predictions, this can be unnerving—even if the outcome is, objectively speaking, good news," said Jason Plaks of the University of Toronto, who worked with Kristin Stecher of the University of Washington in Seattle on the study.

But those with a "malleable" belief system think of themselves capable of evolving and improving, and they react badly if their performance simply stagnates. If their scores did not improve in two successive tests, the response could be a decline in their performance.

"When they stayed stuck in place, it was confusing. It's as if, 'well, what do I do now? I don't have a clear sense of where my abilities stand.'

Whereas 'if I did worse, at least I clearly failed and I can adopt a different strategy,'" Plaks said in an interview.

The researchers said people with a fixed mindset might be less ready to handle the successes and failures inherent in fast-moving sectors like information technology or medicine, and they could damage the chance of success there.

The study used a questionnaire to assess how 500 subjects viewed their abilities, asking participants to what extent they agreed with statements like, "My intelligence is something that is fixed about me and I cannot change" or "I feel I can change my intelligence a lot." Each individual was then classified as holding a fixed view or a malleable view based on the scores, and took a series of logic tests, with randomly assigned feedback before the final test. Plaks said a malleable belief system is generally more beneficial, but there were times when the opposite might apply.

"I think the most effectively functioning person is able to access either belief perspective appropriately and understand that this is a case where I should have a malleable belief and this is a place where I should have a fixed belief," he said.

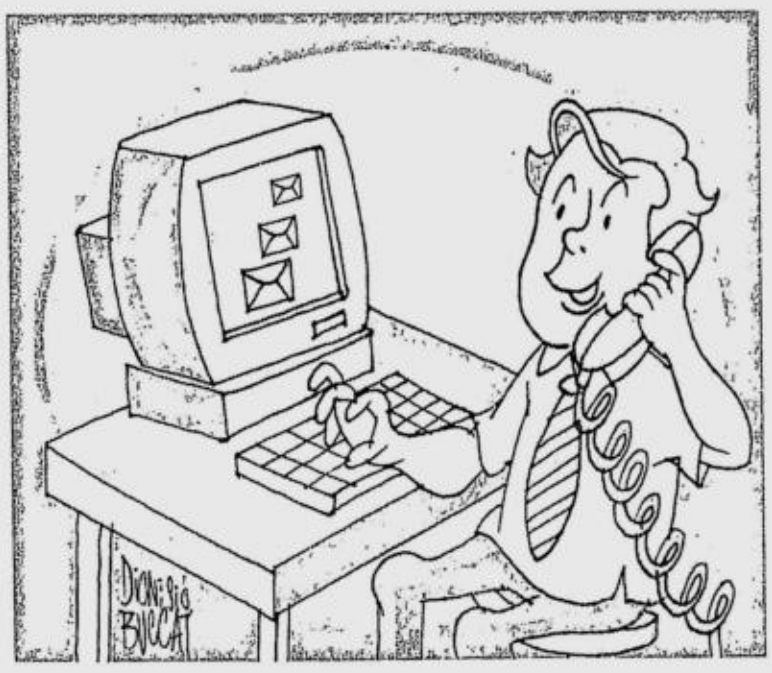
Reuters

Call center adopts two-pronged scheme to generate jobs

IN LESS THAN A DECADE, the business process outsourcing (BPO) industry has transformed local culture in many ways. The 24-hour establishments are everywhere, and so are groups of young people in all forms of attire taking their breaks on the steps of high-rise buildings at two in the morning.

More than that, the industry has had a strong impact on the Philippine economy. The contact center industry has experienced phenomenal growth in a short period of time and has risen from a collection of small companies to become one of the nation's major economic contributors. It has raised employment rates by utilizing untapped talent and has greatly increased the number of jobs available in the country. Furthermore, it has become the most attractive option for jobseekers.

The Business Processing Association of the Philippines (BPAP) has projected that under the right circumstances, the local BPO industry could attain a 10-percent share of the global market, growing from its current 4-percent market share.



Should the industry aspirations be achieved, it is also projected that 600,000 new jobs would be created, which in turn would generate indirect employment for an additional 1.2-1.5 million workers.

However, to achieve such growth, the industry must first overcome the challenge of a shrinking talent pool. One of the contact centers rising to meet this challenge head-on is Sitel, who has spearheaded a program that will cultivate a potential talent pool.

The Sitel Academic Partnership Program (SAPP) has a unique two-pronged approach to job generation. On one hand, the company finds colleges and universities to partner with, offering technology and training expertise to the academic institution's students. On the other, it offers near-hires and aspirants a chance to secure contact center skills and training for free at various Sitel off-site training facilities. Having established the effectivity of the project, Sitel intends to implement SAPP nationwide.

SAPP has been the focus of much praise, especially as a collaboration of three unlikely partners—the academe, the business sector, and the government. During a tour of the Sitel Baguio sites and facilities, OIC for the Office of the Secretary for Internal Affairs of the Department of Labor and Employment Hon. Lourdes Trasmonte and Director of Bureau of Local Employment lawyer Jalilo dela Torre, both commended Sitel for its efforts.

Sitel hopes that such an initiative will spur similar activities from other industry players. "What Sitel has done here is truly inspiring," said Trasmonte. "Aside from providing jobs, they are also providing our young workers to become productive members of the labor force by providing free training and support for the training of these near-hires and students, and partnering with us and the academe."

Gospel: Mt. 24: 37-44
So too, you also must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come.

Passport to eternity

By Bishop Precioso D. Cantillas, SDB, DD

AN EMPLOYEE OPTED FOR EARLY RETIREMENT IN ORder to get his lump sum retirement pay. A sickness which unexpectedly came up forced him to stop working to get the needed surgical and medical treatment. One might say that luckily, the guy has a job which could help him pay for the cost of hospitalization. Another might say however, that it is ironic that the worker spent his strength and energies working to earn money and enjoy life, only to find out in the end that he has to spend what he earned through work to regain his health in the hospital bed.

Unexpected things do come our way in life. Work—the positive outlook of it, the useful learning it could contribute in the worker, the financial and material earnings it could provide—could sometimes be a useful and dependable means of preparing ourselves for such surprises in life. On the other hand, the negative perspective on work—an abusive attitude towards it, and an excessive dependence on it and its "fruits" which could make the worker forget or ignore the Source, Giver and Lord of work—could bring the worker into events which he would wish he were prepared to face or handle.

By looking at work with the eyes of faith and working with the awareness of the presence of Jesus, one could be better prepared to encounter any surprising events in life, including that of the unexpected moment of meeting one's Creator face to face. Work well done—not merely for the individual's satisfaction but also for the good and welfare of others and for the glory of the Almighty—could be the believer's passport to God's kingdom and his assurance of everlasting life and happiness. *(E-mail the author at mfvg@skyinet.net)*

REFLECTIONS FOR THE WORKING SOUL

This issue of preparing

By Teresa R. Tunay, OCDS

TWO OF THE THINGS THAT PROD ME ON TO WORK hard in media are: one, the promotion of truth and two, the situation of our marginalized *kababayans*. Not so much those who work in airconditioned offices, who never get their hands soiled in labor, who are well-fed or who collect more than adequate paychecks come payday, as those with little or no schooling and who can hardly make both ends meet. They toil day and night at jobs no one would envy them for, not minding their sweat and the grime in their hands, hardly knowing or caring how they contribute to the country's economy or progress. Scavengers are one of them; part-time workers and part-time bums; so are self-taught fix-it-all handymen who leave your home appliances or systems in a worse state than when they find it—you know the kind I'm referring to.

We have so many of them in our country—a daunting number in proportion to the compassionate few who devote their lives to improving the lot of these Filipinos. Sometimes, when I reflect on Gospel stories like this one for today, I surmise that the most I can do for them is to tell the truth about their situation as I see it. And never mind "results"—the poor have been there since time immemorial and will be there—it seems—forever and ever ad infinitum. Still with hope I go on, commiserating with the marginalized as much as is demanded by my profession in the pursuit of truth.

The truth is, we have millions of laboring *kababayans* who have never heard of the word of God, let alone ponder it. It would be cruel to tell them to prepare for the unexpected hour the Son of Man will come, for sudden disaster or death, when their ignorance is already a disaster and their poverty, a living death. *(E-mail the author at teresa_de_manila@yahoo.com)*

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Stronger partnership among maritime industry stakeholders

LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT SECRETARY ARTURO D. BRION has called for stronger partnership among various stakeholders in the maritime sector to effectively respond to the fast-changing developments in the global maritime industry.

Speaking at the recent Philippine Manning Convention which sought to address increasing global demand for seafarers, Brion commended the convention's theme – Joining Hands to Meet the Global Demand for Seafarers Towards a Committed Partnership – as an attestation to the stakeholders' resolve to face the challenges of the future together.

"We in the government, and the Dole family in particular, stand ready to be counted as a full participating member of that partnership," Brion stressed.

"It must be a partnership that calls for the expansion of our spheres of cooperation beyond the traditional human resources demand and supply considerations of the (maritime) industry. It (partnership) must embody a social dimension that will allow the pursuit of both economic and social goals and gains for all of the industry's players – the ship owners, foreign principals, manning agents, the seafarers, and government – who must then look to each other as truly contributing 'partners' in the fullest sense of the word," he added.

In a paper presented by Amosup president Capt. Gregorio S. Oca at the convention, among the factors cited as causing the crewing crisis was the tendency of a lot of maritime officers to retire at a young age after having attained the highest position in their particular department then opt to take on jobs at shore. These officers no longer aspire for top positions in both the deck and engine departments as they already are contented with the current positions they hold. Data from Amosup indicate that 20-25 percent of those filing for retirement claims are less than 50 years old.

Other significant factors cited in the paper include increasing responsibilities of senior officers and their burdensome administrative functions brought about by new security regulations and reportorial requirements. These have increased stress and fatigue, pushing these officers to work harder.

Brion said that further education and skills training for our seafarers would be a good starting place for stakeholders to jointly address.

"A shared responsibility of our partnership may be in this area where the benefits can be common to all—the seafarer, his family, ship owners and manning agencies, the industry, and the home country will all benefit as the seafarer expands and deepens his knowledge and skills base."

He also called on the industry and foreign principals to help search for ways that the remittances of our seafarers can be protected against the uncertainties of foreign exchange fluctuations.

The effort, he said, will directly benefit the seafarer, his family, and the home country, but indirectly it will also benefit the industry as it will establish seafaring as a reliable career. He added that it will help in the advocacy of inviting the youth to maritime careers.

Brion also cited vital interests of the Dole that relate to dispute management and labor and employment education. He emphasized that one of Dole's approaches toward dispute avoidance is through education, even as he relayed a plan of launching the "Continuous Labor and Employment Education" to be administered by Dole regional offices nationwide next year.

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4th Strategic Marketing	Dec. 4 8:30 - 5:30 p.m.	Mandarin Oriental Hotel, Makati City	Mansmith and Fielders, Inc. Tel. 722-2318 / 727-7142 / Alice Torres email: info@mansmith.net
Client Centric Selling	Dec. 4-5 8:30 - 5:30 p.m.	Mandarin Oriental Hotel, Makati City	Mansmith and Fielders, Inc. Tel. 722-2318 / 727-7142 / Alice Torres email: info@mansmith.net
Developing the Leader Within You	Dec. 4-5 8:30 - 5:30 p.m.	Intercontinental Mla Makati City	Inspire Leadership Consultancy, Inc. Tel. 8129125/09193824382 Bing or Pam email: pamtmiranda@gmailcom
Presenting with Power	Dec. 6 & 7	Penthouse, Makati Stock Exchange Bldg.	South East Asia Speakers & Trainers Bur. Tel. 881-2540 (Francis/Delia/Myrna) seawebit@surfshop.net.ph
Positive Management for Supervisors	Dec. 6 & 7	Century Park Hotel P. Ocampo St., Manila	Positive Mngt Sem. Magntitude HRD Tel. 806-5743 email: magnitudehdr@yahoo.com
Environmental Conflict Management Course	Dec. 11 - 12	ECI Training Center Unit E, 9th F, Strata 100 Bldg, Ortigas Center	ARIVA Tel. 895-8058 / 895-9527 / 890-9651 email: successseminars@Ariva.com.ph
360° Leader Workshop	Dec. 12-13 8:30 - 5:30 p.m.	EDSA Shangri-la Mandaluyong City	Inspire Leadership Consultancy, Inc. Tel. 8129125/09193824382 Bing or Pam email: pamtmiranda@gmailcom
Social Acceptability Training Course	Dec. 13 - 14	ECI Training Center Unit E, 9th F, Strata 100 Bldg, Ortigas Center	ARIVA Tel. 895-8058 / 895-9527 / 890-9651 email: successseminars@Ariva.com.ph
Managing Emotions at the Workplace	Dec. 13 - 14	Mandarin Oriental Makati	American Management Association Tel. 7596680 and look for Jasmin email: jrunez@imperialconsulting.com.ph

Reintegration caravans for OFWs to be held in key cities

THE NATIONAL REINTEGRATION CENTER FOR OVERSEAS Filipino workers (NRCO) of the Department of Labor and Employment (Dole) will launch a series of OFW reintegration caravans in key cities nationwide to deliver reintegration services closer to OFWs and their families.

Labor and Employment Secretary Arturo D. Brion said the caravans are aimed at creating awareness for the NRCO by bringing the reintegration program for OFWs to the regions. Program services include assisting OFWs and their families gain access to business loans, skills training, and other forms of assistance such as legal assistance, learning sessions on financial management and savings mobilization schemes, and also job facilitation services for those who still want to work whether abroad or locally.

The caravans, Brion said, it also endeavors to attract the participation of more stakeholders in the delivery of reintegration services to optimize assistance to OFWs and their families.

He said the reintegration caravans kicked off in Baguio City on Nov. 23. It would be followed by caravans in Manila, Davao City, and Iloilo City in December.

He noted that the results of consultations with OFW family circles in the National Capital Region and Regions IV-A (Calabarzon), 6 (Western Visayas), 7 (Central Visayas), and 10 (Northern Mindanao) showed gaps between overseas employment and the attainment of development goals.

The gaps underscored research indicating that a significant portion of OFWs' earnings are earmarked for daily expenses, education, home construction and renovation, and purchase of real estate and appliances. Only a small percentage is save or set aside for productive undertakings or investments.

To help address the gaps and ensure development gains from migration, Brion initiated the setting up of the NRCO early this year. The center serves as a "One Stop Center" providing various reintegration services for OFWs and their families. It is also a "Service Networking Hub" that facilitates the delivery of services by cooperating stakeholders and service providers to OFWs and their families.

NRCO services for OFWs and their families include assistance on entrepreneurship/enterprise development, training/retooling, and retirement and investment programs.

Environmental conflict management seminar

A TWO-DAY COURSE WILL BE HELD ON DEC. 11 AND 12 AT ECI Training Center, Unit E, 9th Floor, Strata 100 Bldg., Ortigas Center, Pasig City, on Environmental conflict, designed to equip individuals with the skills and knowledge needed to deal with and resolve conflicts.

This course is ideal for project developers and implementers, LGU and NGO planners, financial planners, engineers and project managers, as well as pollution control officers and environmental personnel. For more info, contact ARIVA at 8958058, 8959527 or 8909651. Email at successseminars@Ariva.com.ph

Special program set

DINA H. LOOMIS, PRESIDENT OF THE SOUTH EAST ASIA Speakers and Trainers Bureau, Inc announces the conduct special programs for The Total Secretary on Dec. 4; and Presenting With Power on Dec. 6-7 at the Penthouse, Makati Stock Exchange Building, Ayala Ave., Makati City.

For inquiries, contact telephone nos: 881-2540; 881-7358; 882-5716; 883-2676 (Francis/ Delia/ Myrna/ Andrew) or email us at seawebit@surfshop.net.ph. Surprise gifts await the first 10 callers who will register and pay.

More surprises for the 7th World Bazaar Festival

WORLDBEX SERVICES INTERNATIONAL (WSI), Asia's premiere organizer of the most-attended industry trade fairs in the region, prepares for another round of successful Christmas fête with the 7th World Bazaar Festival, slated on Dec. 6-16, at the World Trade Center.

A grand bazaar for a great cause, the World Bazaar Festival gears toward staging another Yuletide shopping feat with over 500 booths catering to over 180,000 shoppers. The Night Market, Celebrity Pavilion, and various assortments of products and services await once again the Pinoy bazaristas.

Experience Christmas with superb entertainment and purchase power as you delve on the latest accessories, books, music products, handicrafts, fashion jewelry, paper products, car accessories, home furnishing, telecommunication gadgets, among others, available in the local and international market.

Proceeds of the 7th World Bazaar Festival will go to the ABS-CBN Foundation Inc., a non-stock, non-profit organization that undertakes rescue and relief activities like first aid-training, rehabilitation, critical incidence stress debriefing, medical missions and outreach projects to those who are in need.

"In the spirit of Christmas, we do not only look forward to showcasing the very best of our local and foreign commodities," Joseph Ang, WSI's Founding Chairman, said. "We also try to reach out to the unfortunate sectors of the society through the World Bazaar's success."

The 11-day event will be open to the public from 12 noon to 10 p.m. on Monday to Thursday and from 10 a.m. to 12 midnight from Friday to Sunday.

For more inquiries, call WSI at tel. no. (02)531-6350/74 or 534-3615 or fax (02)533-2026 or email at info@worldbex.com

Positive management seminar for supervisors

POSITIVE MANAGEMENT SEMINAR MAGNITUDE Human Resource Development, a training organization specializing in people development, announced its upcoming seminar-workshop entitled "Positive Management for Supervisors" at the Century Park Hotel, P. Ocampo Street, Manila, on Dec. 6 and 7.

Managers, entrepreneurs, and supervisors will benefit from this 2-day seminar/workshop, as they will learn how to handle their subordinates, motivate them to improve performance, and discipline them effectively.

They will have the opportunity to learn goal-setting; practice interpersonal skills, and improve their communications ability to deal with all day-to-day employee situations.

Topics for this seminar include Performance Improvement, Correcting Poor Work Habits, Positive Motivation and Positive Discipline. Rafael Z. Perfecto, a well-known speaker in human resource management will conduct the seminar.

Perfecto is a former director of the Personnel Management Association of the Philippines (PMAP), a Fellow in Personnel Management (FPM), and currently a consultant for top multinational companies.

To register, please call 0917-890-9595, Tel. 806-5743 or email magnitudehrd@yahoo.com. Early registration discount applies.

THIRD YEAR ANNIVERSARY

The One Algon Place Foundation Inc Healing Center held its 3rd Year Anniversary on Oct. 28. Shown are from left: Jesse Rebustillo, Rudin Gonzales III, Irma Belisario, Mayor Jun Hemedes of Cabuyao, Laguna, Manolo Villanueva, Mayor Calixto Cataquiz of San Pedro, Laguna, Father Renato dela Rosa and Annie Gonzales. For inquiries, call The One Algon Place Foundation, Inc, Brgy. Mamatid Cabuyao Laguna at 6800-6120 to 21 or 809-2457 / 0917-5555030 and look for Cel Gonzales.

GET IN THE HALLOWEEN SPIRIT

The "Trick or Treat" Halloween Party tagged as "Get in the Halloween Spirit" a dinner cocktail party on Oct. 27, from 7 p.m. to 1 a.m. was successfully held at the SR poolside of the Makati Palace Hotel. The best in costume was won by the youngest partygoer at the age of four (4) Lara Ayumi awarded with the trophy and cash prize by the Deputy Hotel Manager Mary Ann Munda from right and the Hotel Consultant Rafael S. Chico. Make your social function this Christmas season also a success at Makati Palace Hotel. For reservation, call tel. no. 8990344.

Assistant Shipping Administrator

Responsibilities

Responsible for assisting the operation of ADB's Shipping sub-unit, including air/surface freight forwarding needs, transport of household goods and motor vehicles of staff who are being assigned to field offices, resettling upon retirement or upon their initial appointment to ADB; effective and efficient administration of inbound and outbound ADB official shipments; smooth clearance and delivery of shipments; report preparation as well as provide administrative support to Head, OAIS-LM and/or designated National Officer.

Reporting Arrangements

The position reports to the Head, Logistics Management Unit and designated National Officer.

Selection Criteria

Specific criteria include: (i) suitability to undertake the responsibilities mentioned above at the required level; (ii) Bachelor's degree in Business Administration, Accounting, Management or related fields; (iii) at least 5 years relevant experience working for a moving and relocation service company or air/surface freight forwarding service company; (iv) thorough knowledge of guidelines and procedures on inbound cargoes and regulations of the Philippine Government regarding clearance; (v) working knowledge of MS Office applications; (vi) excellent command of written and spoken English; (vii) ability to handle constant volume of work and tight time constraint without loss of accuracy; and (viii) thorough knowledge and understanding of a computerized shipping management system.

For more details about the position, please see www.adb.org/Employment/Local

The Asian Development Bank's vision is a region free of poverty. Established in 1966 and headquartered in Manila, Philippines, ADB's multicultural staff come from over 50 member countries. ADB's Headquarters in Manila generally recruits its administrative staff locally from the Philippines. The position is for a three-year fixed-term appointment. ADB offers a highly competitive salary and benefits package applicable to local staff. While the position advertised is for ADB Headquarters in Manila, Philippines, ADB staff must be prepared to serve in any location outside its Headquarters at the discretion of Management.

Apply electronically, quoting **Ref. No. EXT-AS07-247(4)-OAIS-LM** and **job title** on subject line and attaching application form available on www.adb.org/Employment/apploim.asp to e-mail address: **LS-jobs@adb.org** by **17 December 2007.**

Due to the expected large number of applications, only shortlisted candidates will be contacted. Applications lacking the job reference number and job title or using the wrong e-mail address will not be considered.

Asian Development Bank ADB

www.adb.org

IMMEDIATE HIRING FOR UNITED STATES

YES HUMAN RESOURCES, INC. in behalf of its Principals is looking for qualified applicants for the following positions:

240 HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS for Los Angeles and Baltimore School Districts
- Math, Biology, Chemistry, Physics and SPED
- 3 years minimum experience
- Salaries based on industry standards and years of experience
- SPED teacher must have Masters Degree

Please come to the office with comprehensive resume and Transcript of Records.
Schedule of screening: December 6 & 7, 2PM to 5PM
Schedule of interview with Employer: December 18-19, 2007

HOTEL WORKERS for a 5 star Resort and Casino Hotel in Reno, Nevada
- 30 Room Attendants
- 28 Resort Workers
- 5 Front Desk Receptionists
- 21 Porters
- 8 Laundry Assistants
- 5 Race & Sports Writers
- 5 Hotel Security Officer
- 1 Bowling Clerk
- Must have a valid passport
- At least 21 years old
- Experience a plus

Schedule of screening: To be posted in our website, www.yeshumanresources.com

FOR MANPOWER POOLING ONLY

30 DOT.NET PROGRAMMERS for a St. Louis, Missouri based company
- Microsoft Certified
- Attractive salaries

50 TUBE WELDERS for a company based in Los Angeles, California
- Experience necessary
- TESDA Certified
- Attractive salary based on prevailing standards

30 BOILER MECHANICS for a company based in Los Angeles, California
- Experience necessary
- TESDA Certified
- Attractive salary based on industry standards

Schedule of Screening: December 6 – 7, 2 pm to 5 pm

IMPORTANT: All applicants MUST register and fill up online application in our website, www.yeshumanresources.com before coming to our office.

No fees to be collected

YES HUMAN RESOURCES, INC.
LICENSE NO. POEA-005-LB-081007PL-e
3rd Flr. BT&T Center, E. Rodriguez JR. Ave., Libis, Quezon City
Tel. 9111450 & 9111396

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Health, Education, Equality, Protection
ADVANCE HUMANITY

CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER *(Programme)*

Under the supervision of the Chief of Child Protection, the post will contribute to data collection & analysis; project design, implementation & monitoring; advocacy; & progress reporting on child protection activities to prevent & protect the children from violence, abuse, & exploitation, with a specific focus on violence against children in the streets, institutions, & at schools.

Essential qualifications:

- University degree in social sciences or other relevant field
- Minimum 5 years of professional work experience in project planning, monitoring and data collection and analysis in the field of child protection and child rights promotion.
- Proven ability to conceptualize, develop, plan and manage programmes
- Good analytical, negotiation, communication, and advocacy skills
- Willingness to tackle sensitive issues and ability to do so with tact and discretion
- Demonstrated ability to work in a multi-cultural environment and establish effective working relationship both within and outside the organization.
- Full mastery of the English Language (written and spoken) and the local language.
- Good knowledge of computer management and applications

Please send cover letter and curriculum vitae before **14 December 2007** to:
The HR UNIT through e-mail: hrmanila@unicef.org
We will only reply to shortlisted candidates.

PMAP SUBIC OFFICERS and members pose with the Guest Speaker Jesse Francis Rebustillo during the chapter's November GMM.

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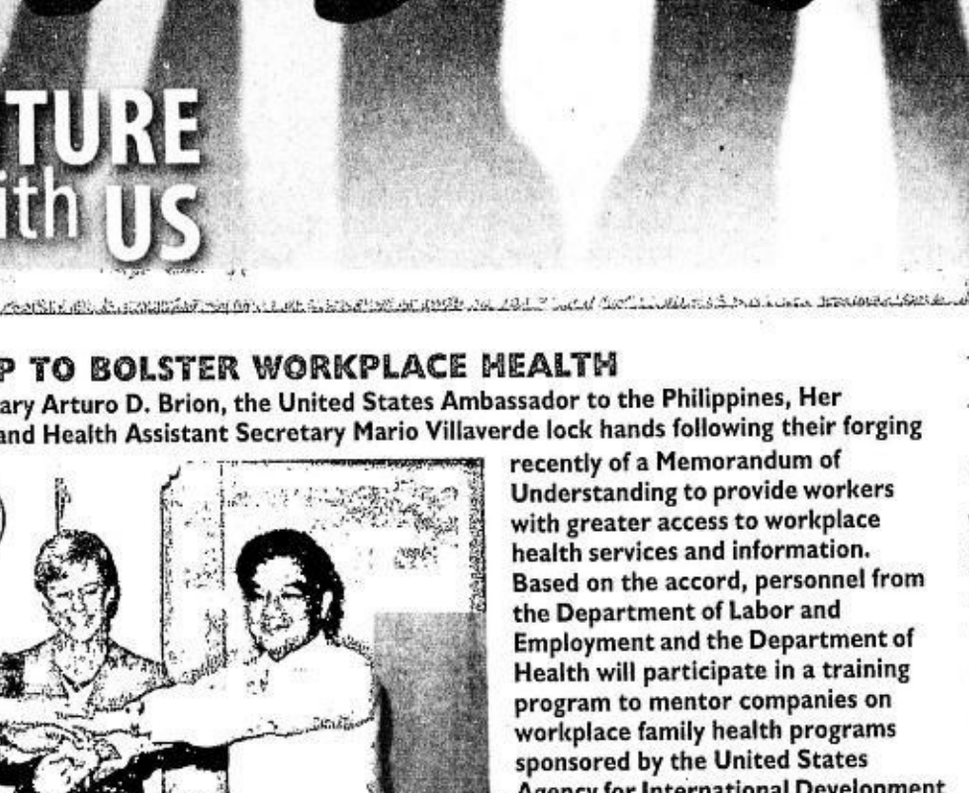
BUILD your FUTURE with US

RP-US PARTNERSHIP TO BOLSTER WORKPLACE HEALTH

Labor and Employment Secretary Arturo D. Brion, the United States Ambassador to the Philippines, Her Excellency Kristie A. Kenney, and Health Assistant Secretary Mario Villaverde lock hands following their forging recently of a Memorandum of Understanding to provide workers with greater access to workplace health services and information. Based on the accord, personnel from the Department of Labor and Employment and the Department of Health will participate in a training program to mentor companies on workplace family health programs sponsored by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through its Private Sector Mobilization (PRISM) project.

RCSI-MINISTOP AND RACUERVO INC SERVICE AGREEMENT

Robinsons Convenience Stores Inc (Ministop) appoints RACuervo Inc as their Site Acquisition Consultant. The Service Agreement was signed by Johnson Robert Go, Jr., president of RCSI-Ministop (seated second from left) and Ramon C.F. Cuervo III, president of RACuervo Inc (seated second from right). Also present during the signing were Ronald R. Agustin, GM and Head - Research and Consultancy of RACuervo Inc (seated leftmost), Rocco Manolo S. Enriquez, regional development manager of RCSI-Ministop (seated rightmost), Joseph L. Reyes, area development manager, RCSI-Ministop (standing left) and Paul de Jesus of RACuervo Inc.



DOLE to organize team versus contractualization

THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT (Dole) is set to organize a special team, which will be tasked to address the recurring complaints of workers and unions against contract-ualization.

Labor and Employment Secretary Arturo D. Brion directed the setting up of the special team following the Dole's conduct of massive inspection of establishments in the last four months.

Brion said the massive inspection under Project Inspection Blitz unearthed some violations of the law on contractualization.

Inspection Blitz was launched in July this year to optimize inspection activities of the Dole's lean inspectorate force. The Dole only has about 198 inspectors compared to over 800,000 establishments nationwide.

Under Inspection Blitz, Brion said that a team of Dole inspectors visit all establishments in a particular area in a blitzkrieg style to cover more establishments and, thus, ensure greater compliance of employers with labor laws and standards.

He said the project focuses on the inspection of establishments compliance with core labor standards such as the minimum wage, holiday pay, service incentive leave, and 13th month pay. Other subject of inspection includes SSS, Pag-ibig, Phil-health payments and contractualization.

From July to October 2007, the program covered a total of 12,789 establishments or about 70% more than the 7,359 establishments covered by routine inspection from January to June this year.

Violations corrected at the plant-level under the Blitz Project benefited 10,988 workers who received a total of P15.12 million in field restitutions. Another 10,781 workers received a total of P34.9 million in awards and settlements upon the disposition of labor standards cases.

Along the way, inspectors uncovered cases that seemed to underscore the complaints against contractualization, Brion said as he immediately ordered the setting up of the special team whose main function is to address the complaints.

The Dole Chief said, however, that the team would begin to attend to its task starting January next year upon the resumption of the Inspection Blitz. He said the project would be suspended for one month beginning Dec. 1, until after the New Year in 2008.

Dole inspections are usually suspended during the yuletide season to avoid the notion of the public that inspectors may take advantage of the season to extract gifts from employers. It is also a deterrence against individuals who may pose as Dole inspectors during the holidays also to solicit gifts from employers.

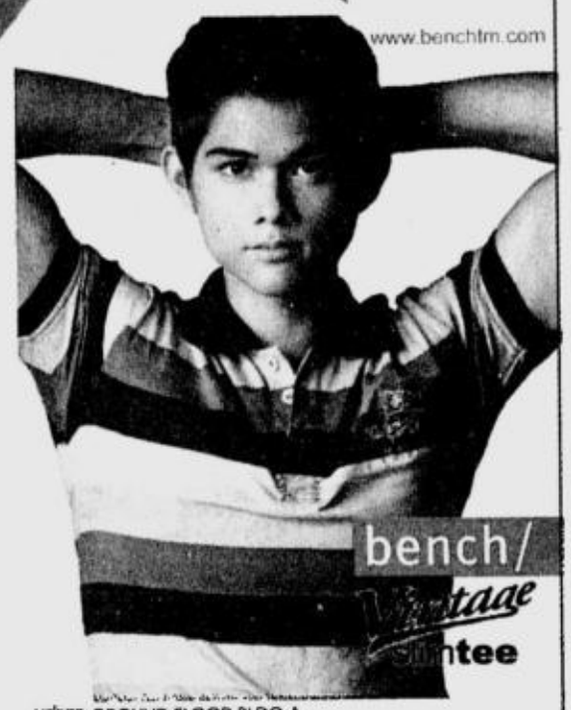
4th Strategic Marketing

MARKETING MANAGERS NEED TO GO BEYOND the daily grind—and that means seeing the bigger picture for more relevant courses of action and use of resources. Mansmith and Fielders, Inc will conduct a one-day course on 4th Strategic Marketing, analyzing your industry and opportunities made easy on Dec. 4, 8:30 to 5:30 p.m. at Mandarin Oriental Hotel. This seminar is an ideal program for those who need to communicate plans to top management using an encompassing view of the industry to maximize opportunities in a systematic manner. For registration or other inquiries, call Alice Torres or Gail Sacluti at 722-2318 / 727-7142 or email us at info@mansmith.net.

I JUST LOVE TO SHOP! shop! SHOP! HOLIDAY 2007

SM City BICUTAN

gear up to style



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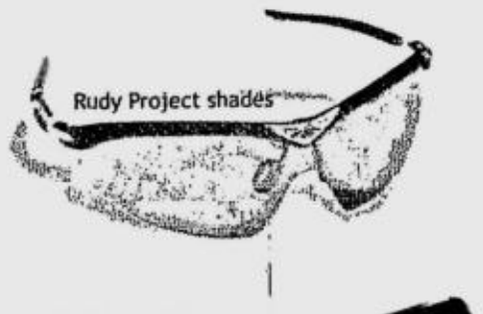

the eyeshop plus

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AMBLVD

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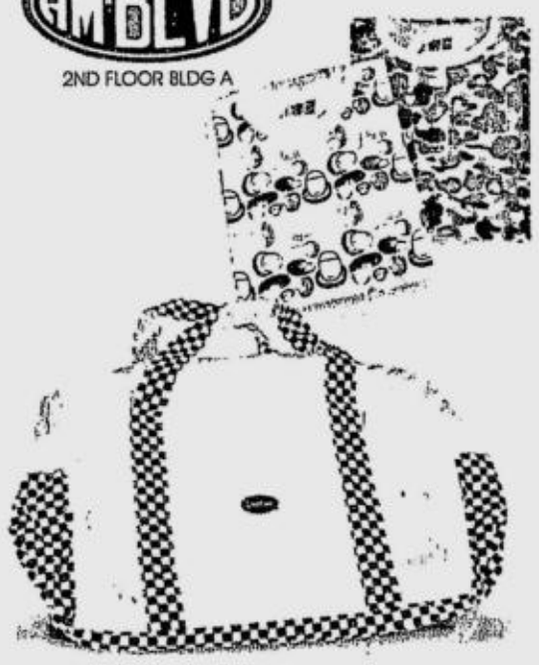

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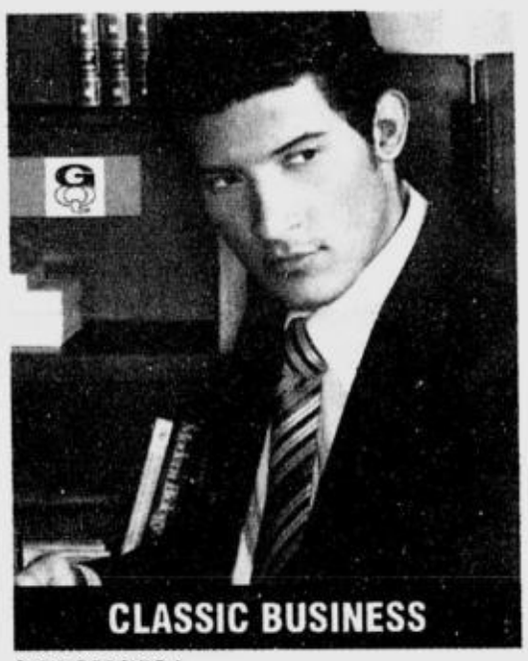

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2ND FLOOR BLDG A

Men's polo long sleeves

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enhance your look

Bolero, leggings,
sash belt, short sleeves,
unique blouse printed

LIMITED

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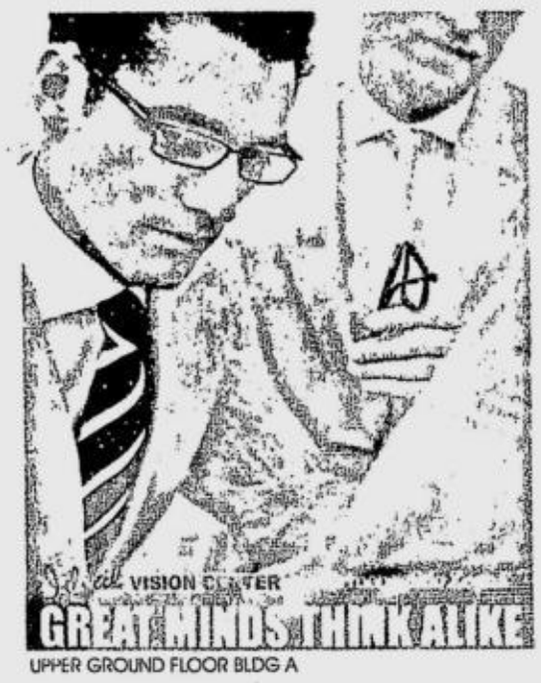

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RUSTY LOPEZ

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genevieve gozum

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SM SUPERMALLS

P1 - A SPECIAL SECTION OF THE PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER DECEMBER 2, 2007

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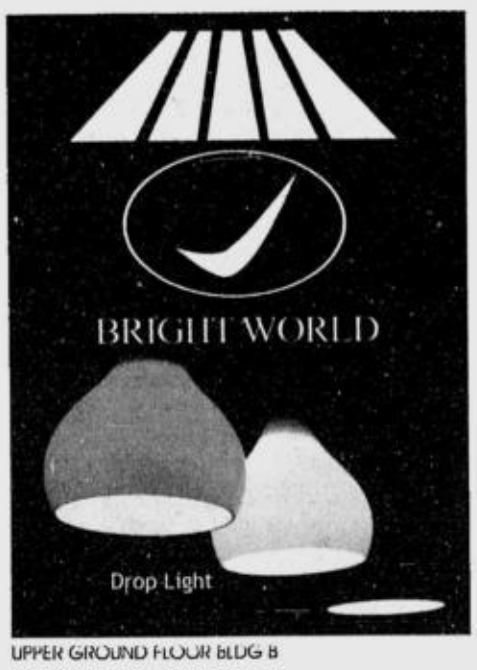

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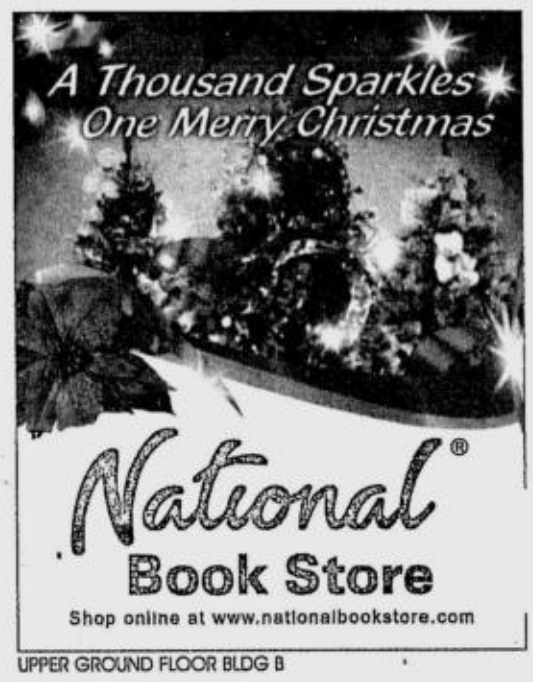

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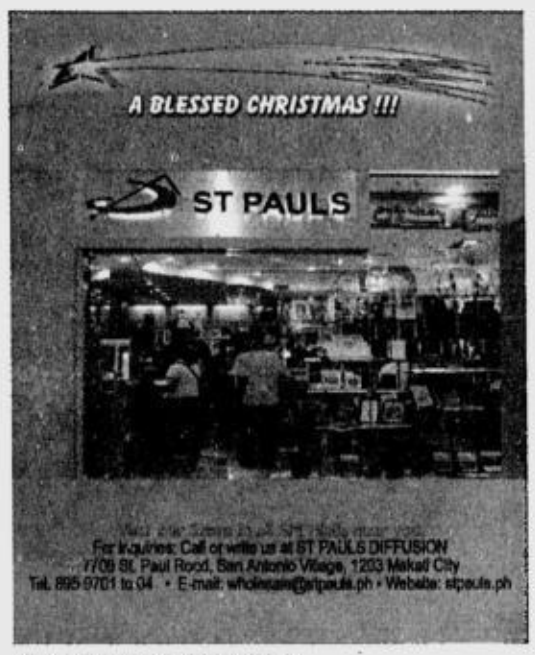

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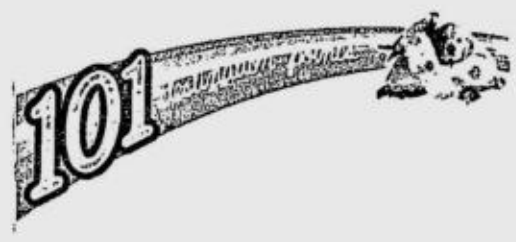

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Eagles CD

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Kyla CD

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SM SUPERMALLS

YOU WANT! HOLIDAY 2007

SM City BICUTAN

reward yourself

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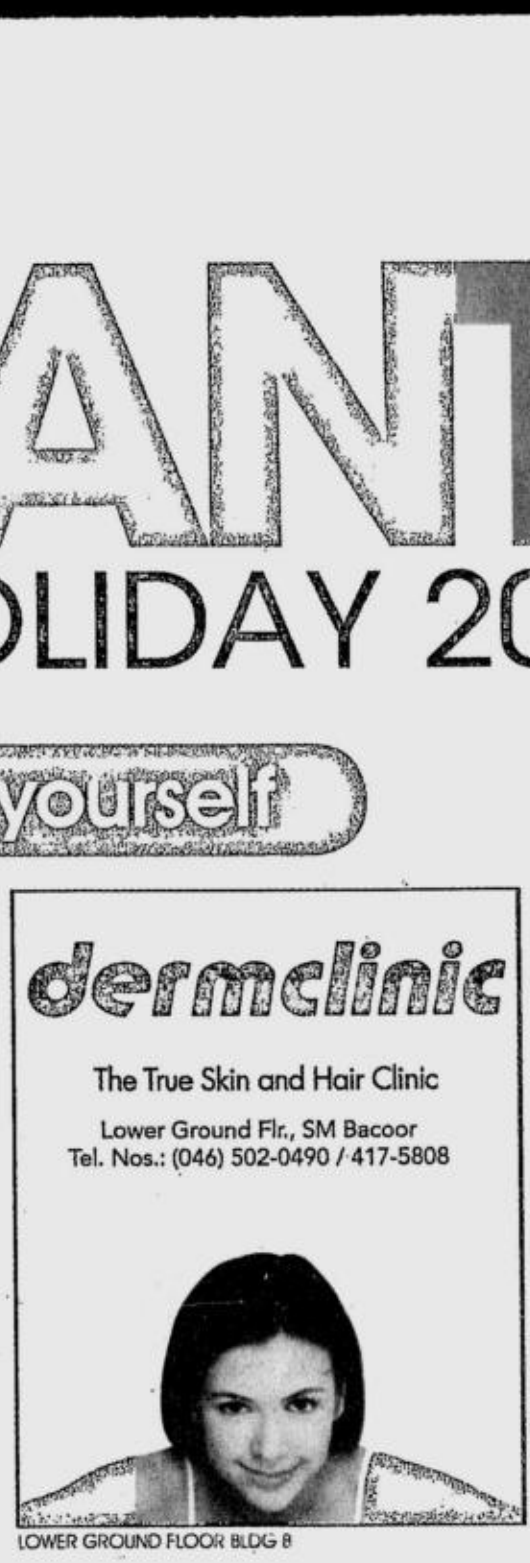

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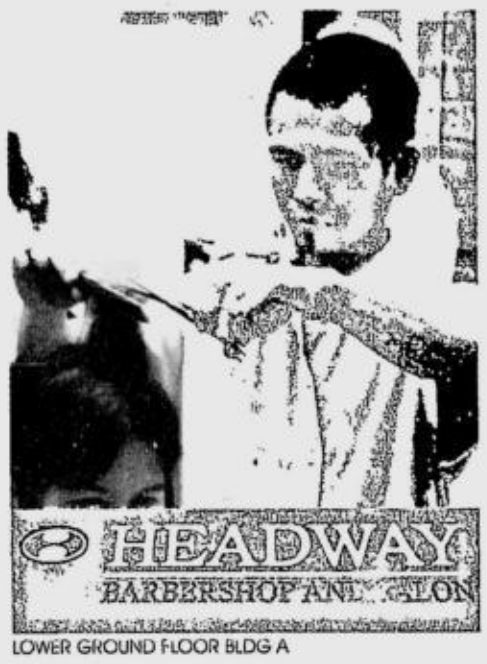

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make it perfect

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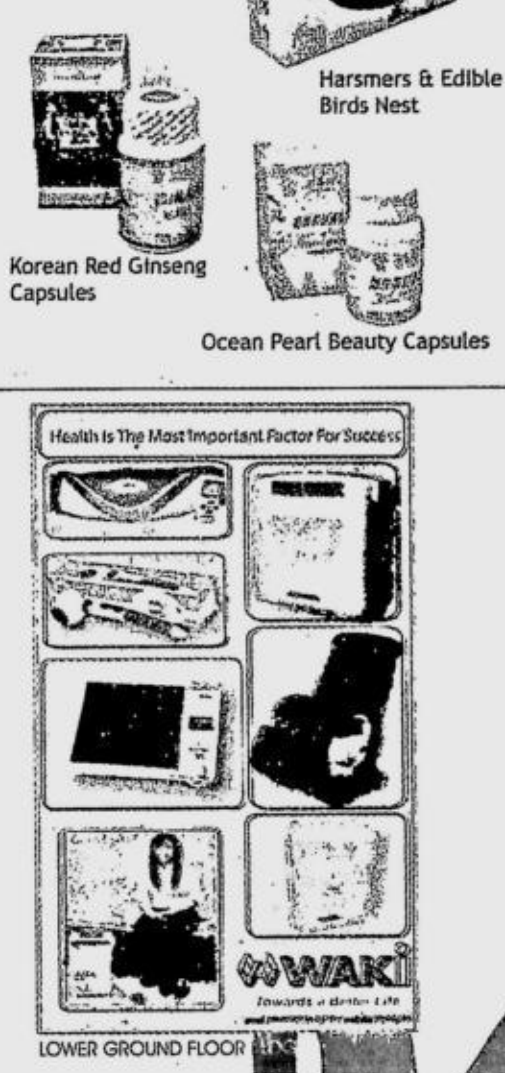


LOWER GROUND FLOOR

LOWER GROUND FLOOR BLDG B

UPPER GROUND FLOOR BLDG B

Lower Ground Floor Bldg A

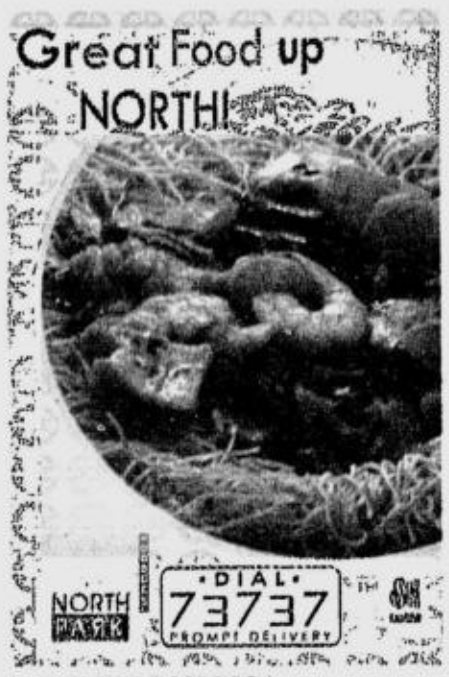
SM SUPERMALLS

I JUST LOVE TO EAT! eat! EAT!

HOLIDAY 2007

SM City BICUTAN

have your fill



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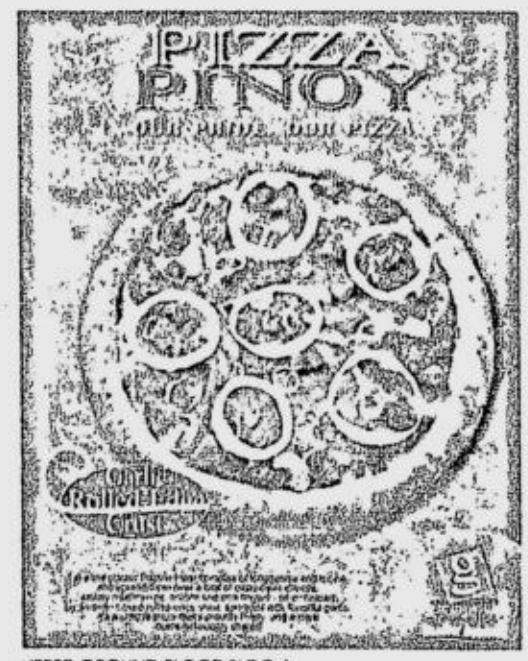
UPPER GROUND FLOOR BLDG A

Chocolate Christmas Cake

It's more beautiful with a Red Ribbon

Whatever the celebration,

UPPER GROUND FLOOR BLDG A



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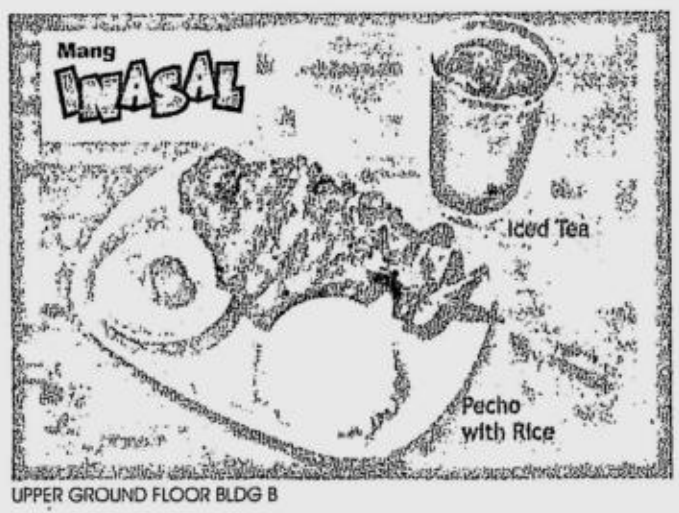

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Promos

- ENY BOTIQUE
  Anniversary Sale
  Until December 15, 2007
  DTI-NCR permit # 3399
- KASHIECA
  Kashieca Sale
  Until December 27, 2007
  DTI-NCR permit # 4602
- ARTWORK
  Pre-Christmas Sale
  Until December 13, 2007
  DTI-NCR permit # 4467
- GIORDANO
  Buy Dry Polo for a regular price of P850 & in the second purhase you can get it for only P499
  Promo runs until December 31, 2007
  Per DTI-NCR permit # 0870 series of 2007
- WATSONS
  15% off on all Watsons Electricals
  Promo runs until November 30, 2007
  Per DTI-NCR permit # 3517 series of 2007
- DUNKIN DONUTS
  Pancake Combos
  Promo runs until December 15, 2007
  Per DTI-NCR permit # 3381, series of 2007
- DERMCLINIC
  0% Interest for 6 months on Enhancement and Aesthetic Surgery Program
  Promo runs until December 3, 2007
  Per DTI-NCR permit # 4262, series of 2007

Events for December

- CHRISTMAS CAROLING CHEERS
  December 1 to 23, 2007
  1 pm to 4 pm
  Food Court Area Bldg. B
- SPECTACULAR FIREWORKS DISPLAY
  December 1, 8, 15, 22, and 30, 2007
  7 pm
  Vacant lot beside Bldg. B

have it done

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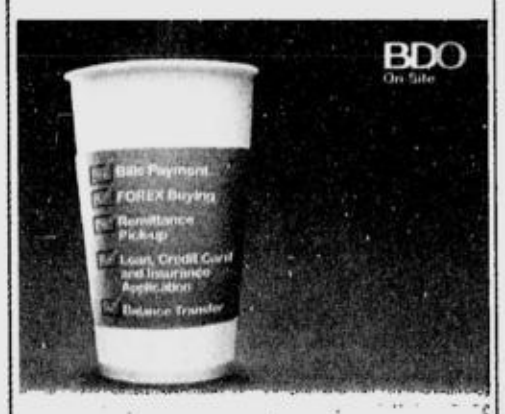

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SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2007 ✦ 8 PAGES ✦ VOLUME 10, NUMBER 88

WHAT'S INSIDE:

What's Santa doing on a handcar? Find out on page 5!

Making books come alive

By Ruth L. Navarra

THE NEXT TIME YOU REACH FOR a book, think about reading it to somebody else. Try to imagine a captivated audience listening to every word you say, watching every gesture that you make.

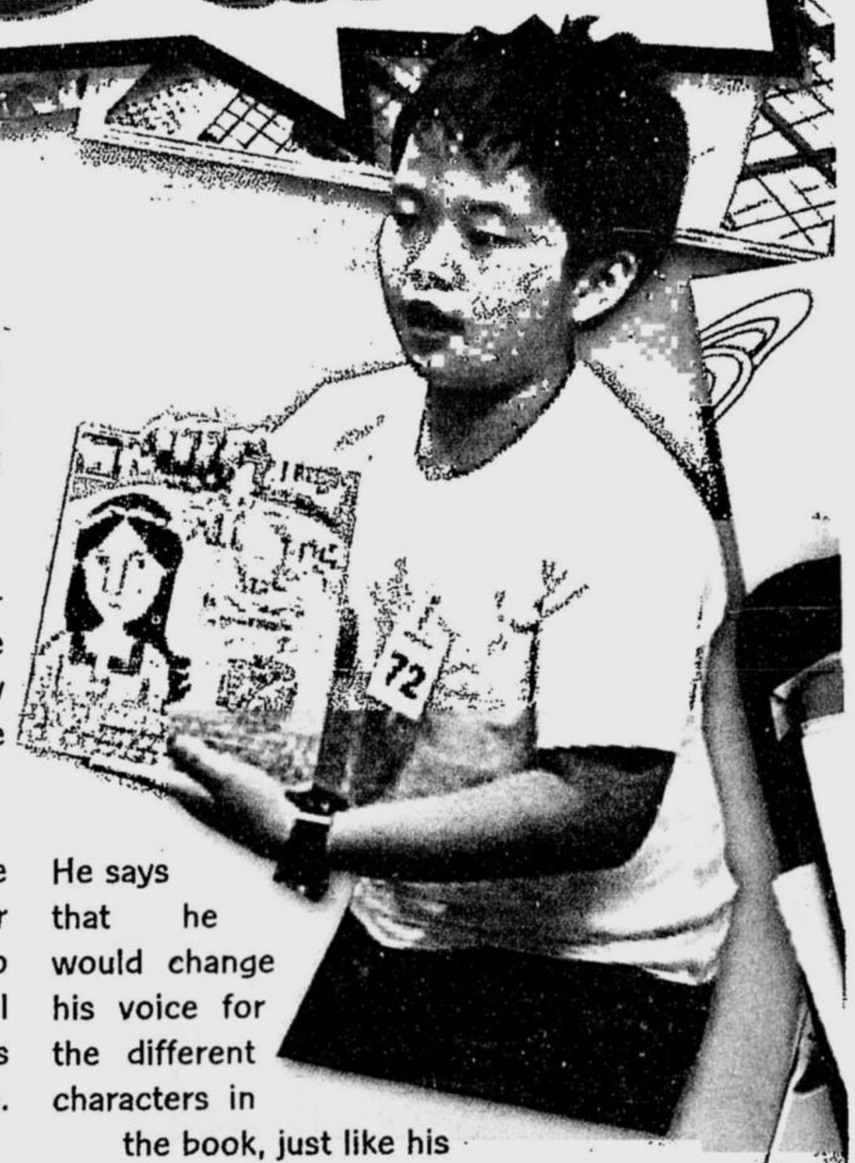
Storytelling has evolved from simple reading to something theatrical. It has become a show that capitalizes on modulated voices, exaggerated movements and interaction with the listeners.

It does not have much use for props and costumes. Instead, the challenge is to make the listener imagine the setting, the clothes, and everything that goes on in a scene.

"A story becomes more colorful if it is being read out loud," says author Luis Gatmaitan during the awarding ceremonies of the 9th Alitaptap Storytelling Competition for Children at the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

Eleven-year-old Rafa Antonio, grand winner of level 2 division (grades 4 to 7) in the competition, agrees. He says that a story becomes more realistic and alive when he reads it for others.

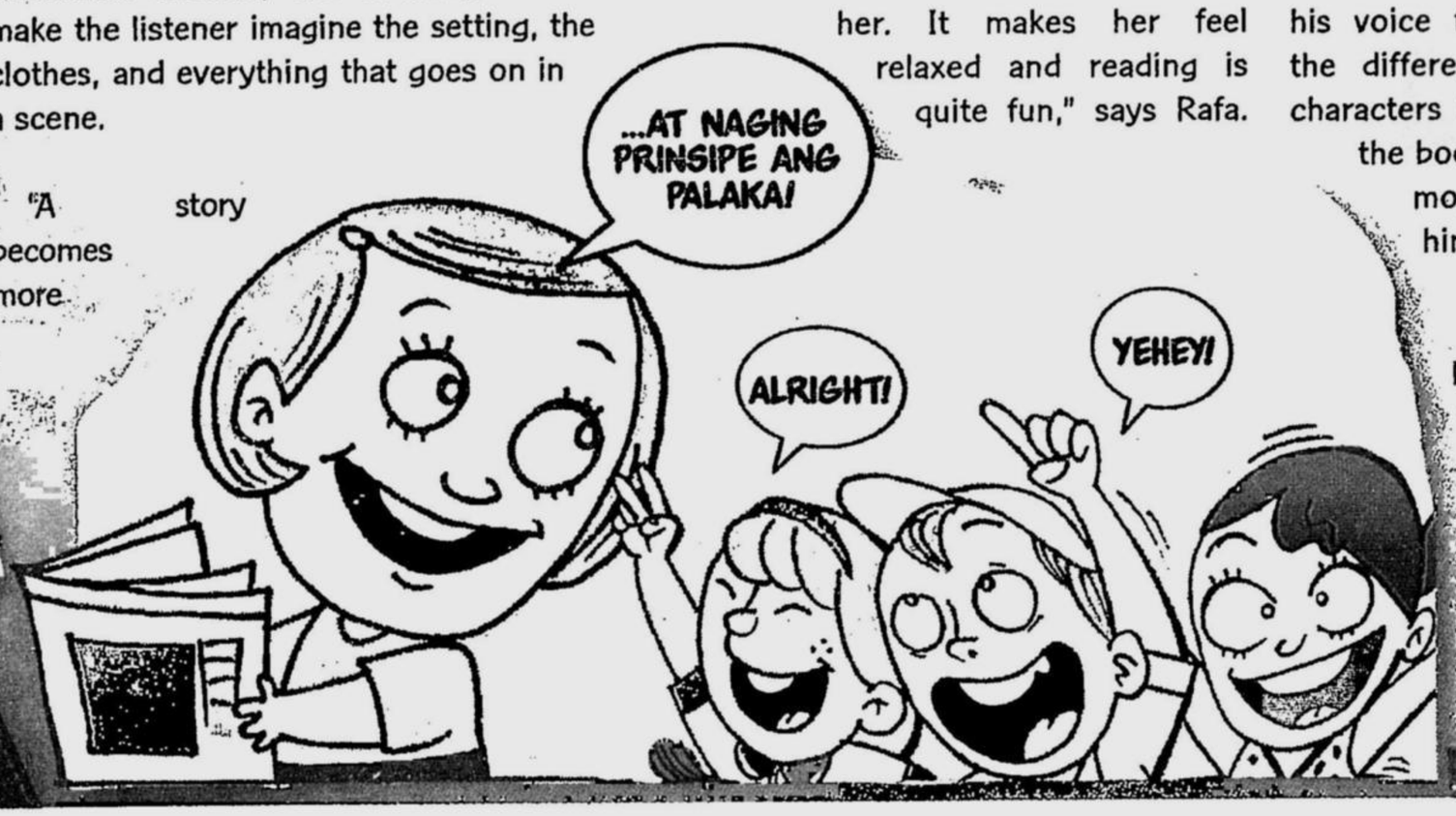
"I read to my younger sister Maia all the time. She would borrow books from her school and she would ask me to read it to her. It makes her feel relaxed and reading is quite fun," says Rafa.



He says that he would change his voice for the different characters in the book, just like his mom does when she reads to him.

This student from Ateneo de Manila was originally a reserve for his team. When their representative turned 13 a few days before the

MAKING BOOKS/ p. 3



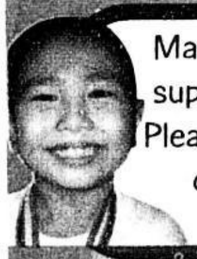
Fourteen-year-old, Michelle Villanueva of Sta. Rosa, Laguna, wants to know ...

IF YOU COULD TALK TO PRESIDENT ARROYO, WHAT WOULD YOU TELL HER?

I hope she finds a way to negotiate peacefully with Sen. Trillanes. —**Pamela Alyson C. Prudente**, 9, Caloocan City

I would tell her to have special projects for the poor, and promote and support biofuels.—**Anton Segismundo**, 10, Quezon City

I wish she could join one of the house-building projects of Gawad Kalinga.—**Maria Alexandra R. Antonio**, 8, Pasig City



Madam President, please support programs for children. Please find a home for the street children.—**Anluver Brandes**, 7, Makati City

I would tell her that she shouldn't lie and she should use her power to help those who are in need like the homeless and the sick.—**Rafa R. Antonio**, 11, Pasig City

I'll ask her what she can do to stop corruption in our country because there's too much suffering already.—**Joseph Ian Franklin H. Aurellano**, 12, Quezon City

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This is your own special space, where you can express your thoughts and feelings bout anything under the sun in the form of essays, poems, letters and even illustrations!

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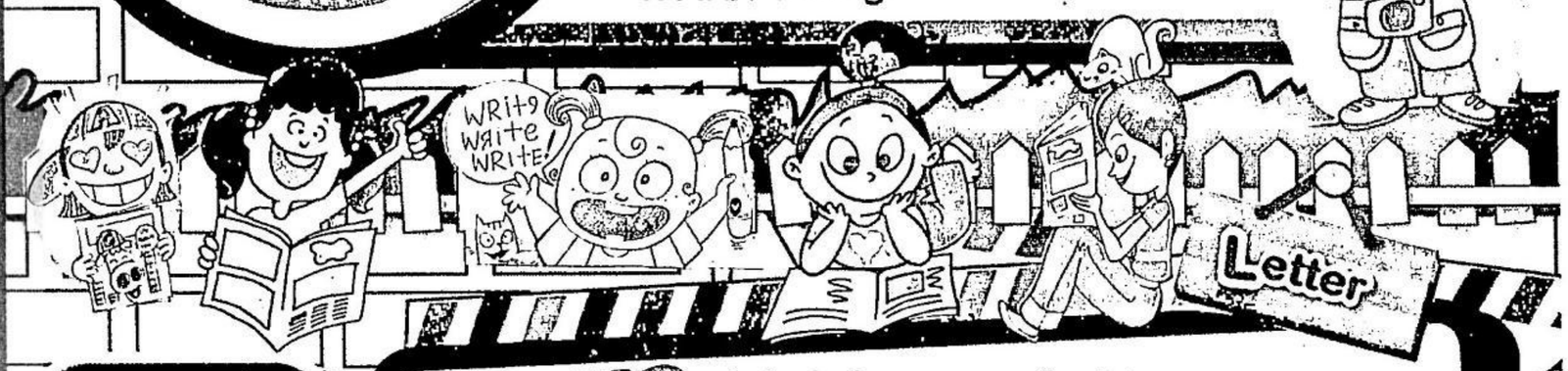

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2005 Best Children's Newspaper Annenberg Hall of Fame

HI JI!

I read your story about the library hubs and it made me really happy. I'm glad that under-privileged Filipino children also get to enjoy the pleasure of reading.

My family and I used to have garage sales to sell our old toys, clothes, and books. But then we realized, instead of selling them, why not share them? We donate our books to charities, foundations, public schools, or even directly to the street kids. Even though we wouldn't earn money, we still got that happy feeling about being generous.

I learned that we should share with others the simple blessings that God gave us, such as books. We should also cherish and be happy with what we have because other kids don't get to enjoy them. That's why we should share. Sharing is caring!

Monica Bengzon
11 years old
Makati City

Sharing is indeed something that should be in our to-do list, especially at this time of the year! Thanks for giving us ideas on how to share, Monica.
—JI Staff

YOU WIN!

Monica gets a Itsy Bitsy Bratz Babyz Mini Playset—Vinessa's Pop-eroni Pizza. Itsy Bitsy Bratz are the smallest version of Bratz Babyz.

Making books come alive (from page 1)

competition, his coaches decided to send him instead.

"I'm not much of a Filipino speaker so I thought my dad was joking when he told me I had to read 'Ang Alamat ng Atis' by Rene O. Villanueva in Filipino," he says. He adds that he was surprised when he was proclaimed the winner, because there were contestants who spoke the language better than he did.

Rafa had to beat several students from both private and public schools all over Metro Manila. Level 2 third place winner Angelica Villarosa of San Joaquin Elementary School previously competed in a storytelling competition of the Department of Education. She currently acts as a "big Ate" in her school and reads to students from grades one to four.

"I'm glad that our winners for this year are a mix of public and private schools," says Alitaptap Storyteller's president Manolo Silayan.

The next time you reach for a book, you might also want to think about sharing it with other kids through the magic of storytelling!

RAFA with his coach and the other winners

STRANGER IN THE MANGER. Everyone is invited to catch "Stranger in the Manger", a free Christmas musical for kids on Dec. 23, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. at GCF South Metro, Daang Hari Road, Las Piñas. "Stranger in the Manger" is a delightful new kids' musical that tells about the birth of Jesus with the fun use of rhyme. Praise Makers Children's Choir will perform great new songs and familiar carols with a new "swing" feel, making this a spectacular presentation that kids and adults will love. So come bring your mom and dad, lolas and lolos, ates, kuyas, titos and titas to "Stranger in the Manger" and rekindle the Christmas story in your hearts all over again. For additional information on Stranger in the Manger visit www.gcfsouth.com.

* * *

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BIRD RACE CHALLENGE. The Recreational Outdoor Exchange and the Wild Bird Club of the Philippines is holding the ROX Bird Race Challenge 2007 on Dec. 1 and 2 at ROX, Bonifacio High Street, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig. As part of awarding ceremonies, coloring and face-painting for kids and an animal conservation show with birds (sea-eagle, cockatoo, etc.) and reptiles (pythons and turtles) will be held free of charge for the general public from 1 p.m. on Dec. 2. Contact Mike of the Wild Bird Club of the Philippines at 0926-6902972 for more details.

Making books come alive (from page 1)

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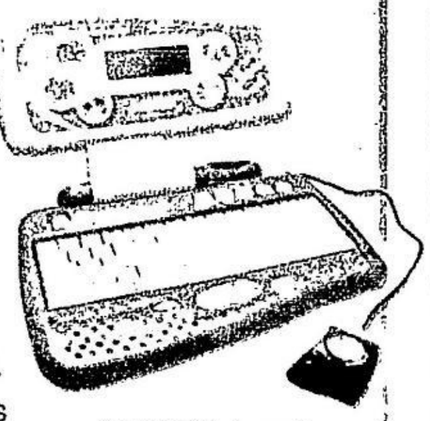

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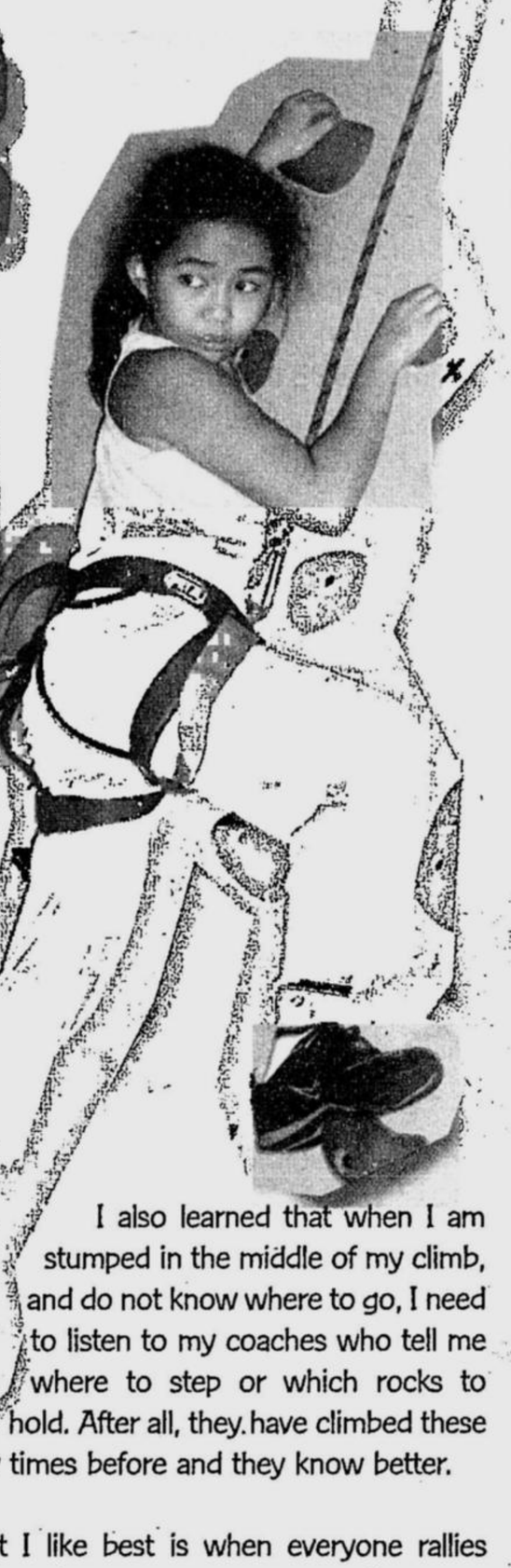
Guyito's Corral

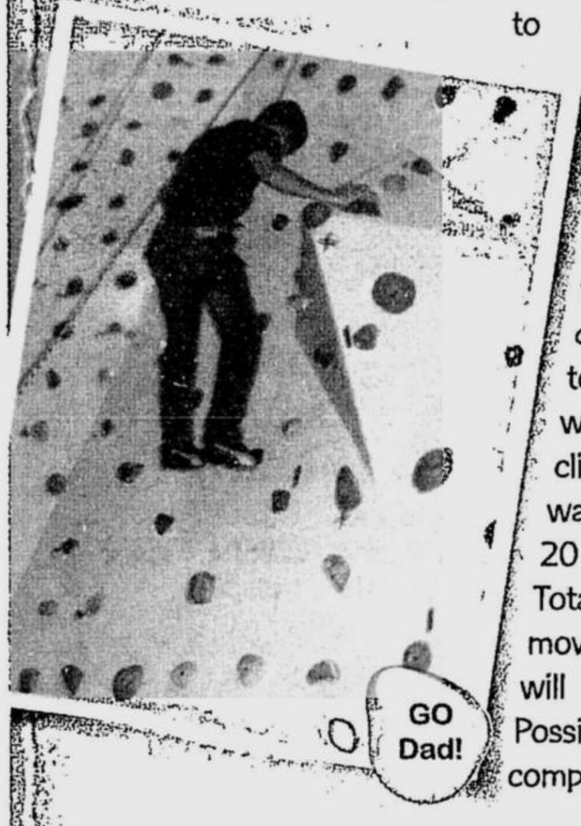
A Different High

By Clare Dela Rosa
9 years old, Canlubang, Laguna



MOST FAMILIES HAVE BONDING moments by eating dinner or going to the mall together. My family bonds by going wall climbing every Saturday night.

It started when we saw Gymtastics in Paseo de Sta. Rosa. I, along with my sisters Christine and Meggy, got attracted to try wall climbing because the wall was very colorful. We even got to wear safety harnesses, just like those worn by cartoon heroes on television. It did not matter to us that we were going to climb a wall that was more than 20 feet high. Totally Spies, move over! We will give Kim Possible some competition!



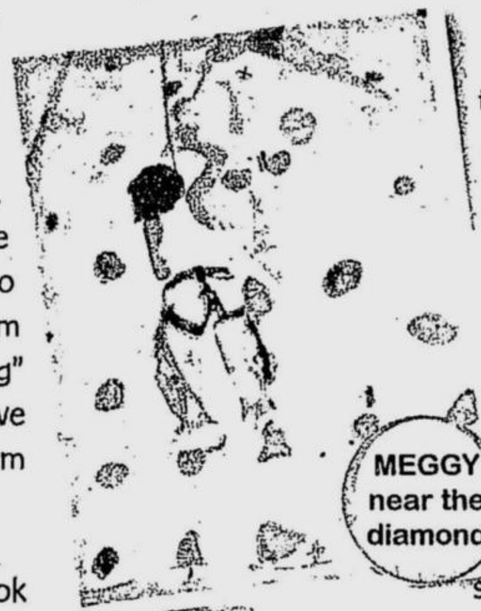
But wall climbing is not as easy as it looks. We need to do warm-up exercises before we can put on our safety gear. To get used to feeling the rocks on our feet and holding them with our hands, we do "horizontal traversing" before we attempt to climb up. This means we have to move sideways among the rocks from one end of the wall to the other end.

The rock walls in Gymtastics may look simple, but when you look closer, you will be surprised to find that there are different challenges that await you.

Christine, who is 5 years old, loves to climb the "easy" wall but gets a little scared just when she is about 2 rocks away from reaching the top. 8-year-old Meggy climbs the inclined wall, but about halfway through, changes directions and moves horizontally instead to land on the easy, straight walls.

As for me, I am still attempting to conquer the "diamond mound" that even adults like my mom and dad find challenging. This big lump on the center wall is shaped like a diamond, and can only be surpassed if you carry your full weight. From my viewpoint, life does not get any harder than this!

What makes wall climbing a bonding moment for us is that afterwards, we talk about the lessons we learned, the difficulties we encountered, or why we "chickened" out.



I never really thought of wall climbing as being more than a physical activity, but it seems I learn something new every time I climb. I learned that things are never always what they seem. When you are all alone up on the wall, there are different rocks that you can choose to hold. Some rocks are big, but with not much space for your fingers to hold. Others may seem small but these are the curved ones that better support your grip.

I also learned that when I am stumped in the middle of my climb, and do not know where to go, I need to listen to my coaches who tell me where to step or which rocks to hold. After all, they have climbed these walls many times before and they know better.

The part I like best is when everyone rallies behind you, and encourages you to continue your climb. I always tell my coach and parents that there should be no pressure when I climb, but I have to admit that it is their voices of praise and remarks of "*kaya mo 'yan*" or "*malapit na*" that keep me going or make me take that extra step.

Our family loves to go wall climbing because it helps my mom lose weight, it is a good form of exercise for my dad, and my sisters think of it as play.

As for me, I return every week and say to that mound, "I will get you this time!" One of these days, I know I will be right.

Baguio, PHILIPPINES

Quake rocks Baguio

BAGUIO schoolchildren marched out of classrooms on Nov. 27 when an earthquake estimated at intensity 6 shook this part of the country. The earthquake happened at noontime and lasted for 12 seconds. Electric and communication services were disrupted in the city. **Vincent Cabreza**

Lima, PERU

Potato tree

POTATOES for Christmas, anyone? At a food exhibit in Lima, a Christmas tree made of 98 kilograms (216 pounds) of potatoes is on display. This is not so strange, for in Peru there are around three hundred varieties of potatoes! Most of them only grow in the Andes at high altitudes. **AP**

Zamboanga, PHILIPPINES

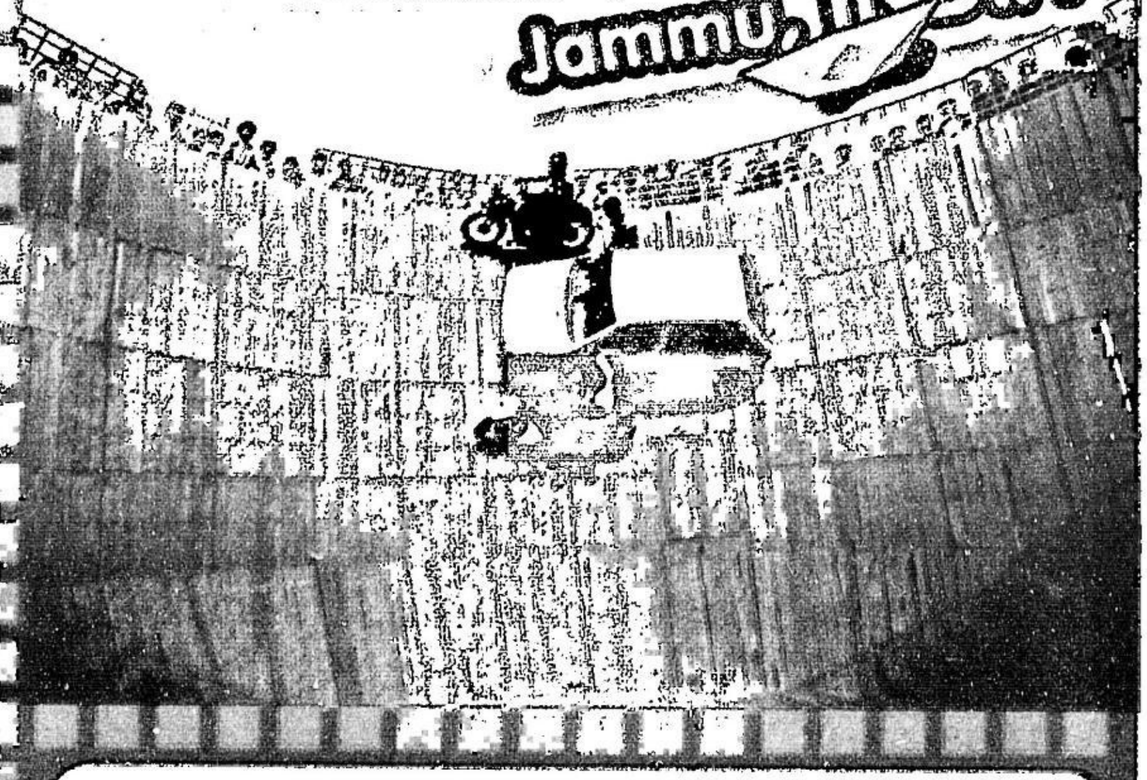
Waves of destruction

RESIDENTS salvage materials from their devastated houses in Zamboanga City after giant waves swamped villages in Zamboanga, Jolo island and Misamis Oriental. Nearly 200 houses were washed away and more than 2,000 people were evacuated in Zamboanga. **AFP**

Defying gravity

STUNTMEN perform on their motorbikes and car on the walls of the "Well of Death" at a fair in India. The stuntmen earn their livelihood by performing dare-devil stunts and attracting a large number of spectators from all walks of life. **Reuters**

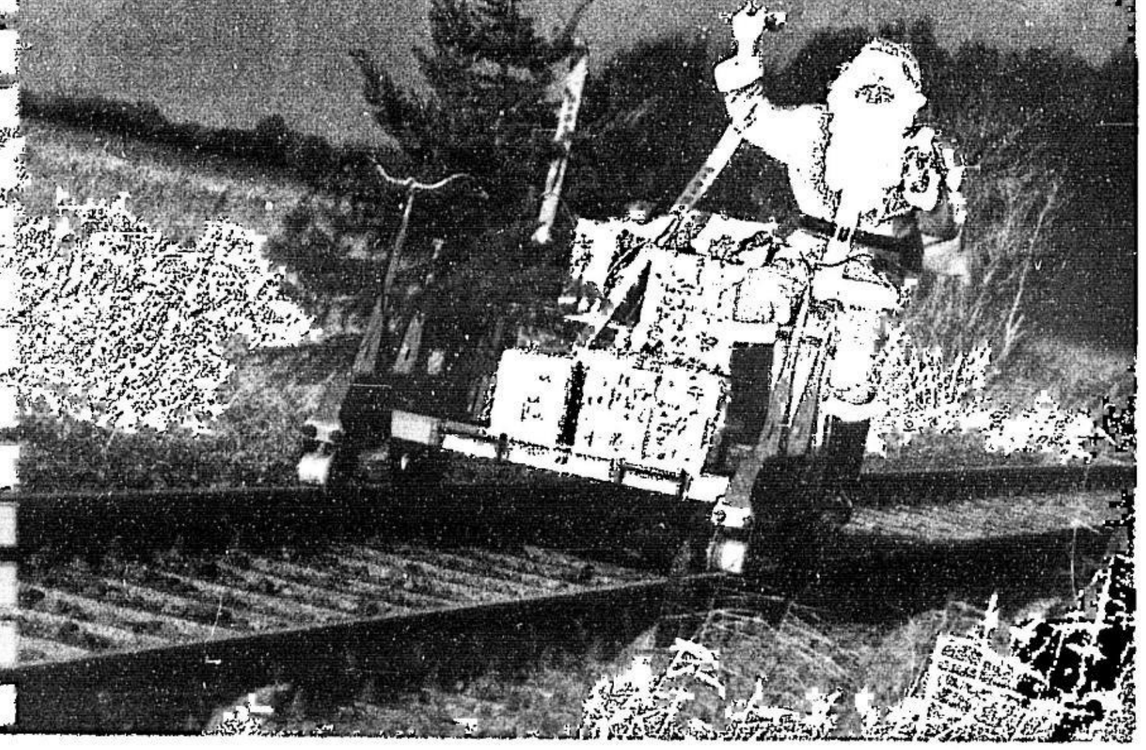
Jammu, INDIA



Where's Dasher and Prancer?

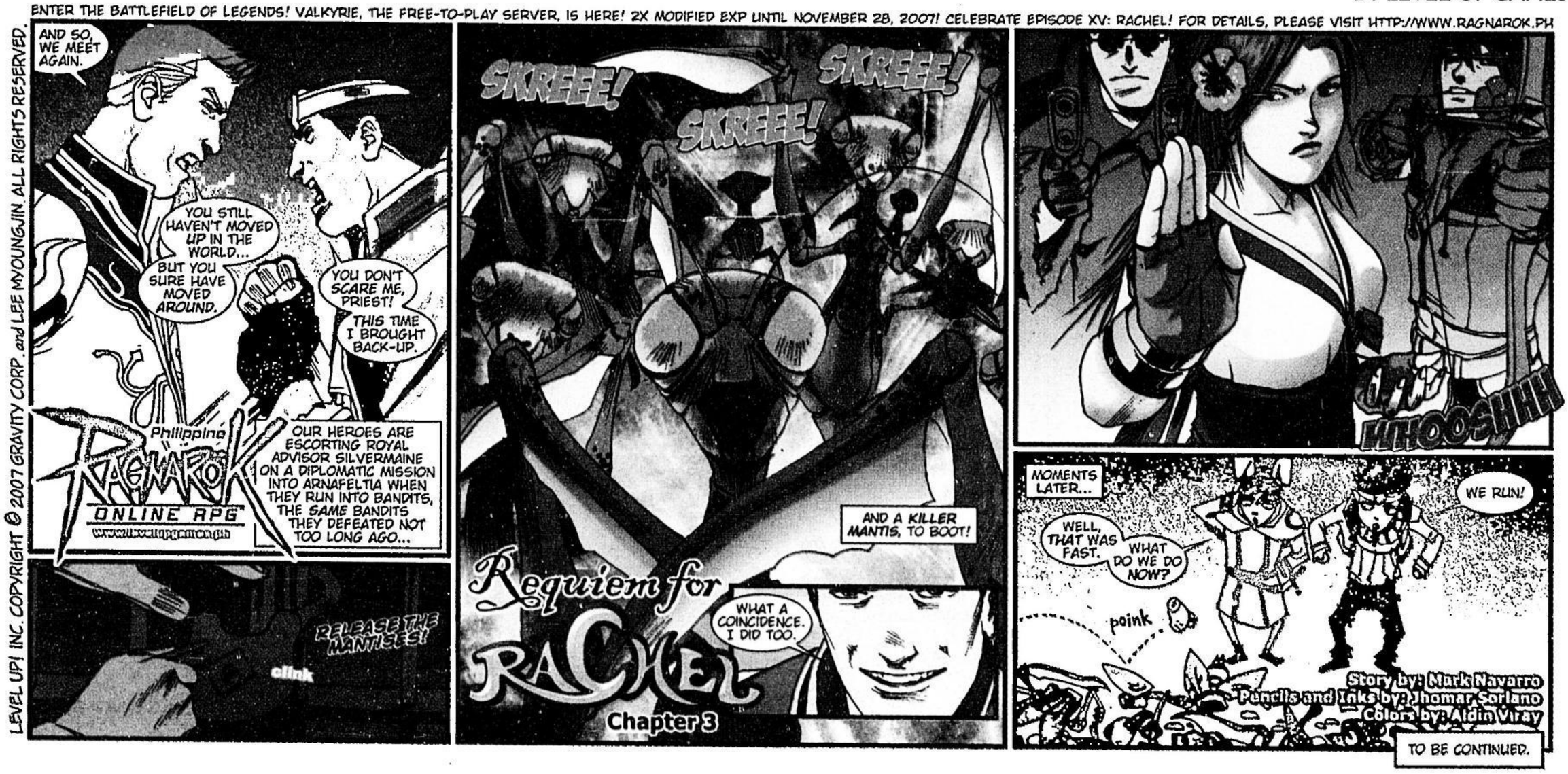
THIS Santa has no need for reindeer, as he uses a handcar to carry all the parcels and presents he will deliver on Christmas Eve. We wonder if he will beat Santa's sleigh to the nearest chimney! **AFP**

Brandenburg, GERMANY



RAGNAROK

BY LEVEL-UP GAMES



PUGAD BABOY

BY POL MEDINA JR.

SUPER INGGO

LAST WEEK: COSTUME SA HALLOWEEN PARTY NI MAYA ANG MGA GARTER SNAKES DAHIL HINDI PALA ITO POISONOUS. NGAYONG LINGGO, ANO KAYA ANG ADVENTURE NG ATING BIDA?

ABS-CBN

WRITTEN BY RANDY VILLANUEVA

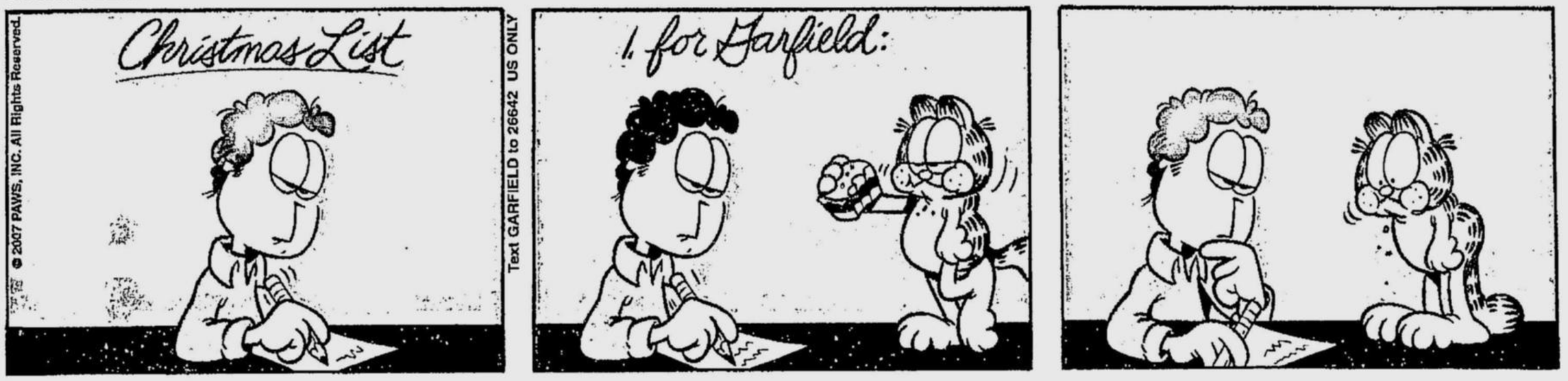
ANO ANG SAGOT SA PALAISIPAN NI JACK? ABANGAN SA SUPER INGGO 1.5 ANG BAGONG BANGIS!

ZITS

BY JERRY SCOTT AND JIM BORGMAN

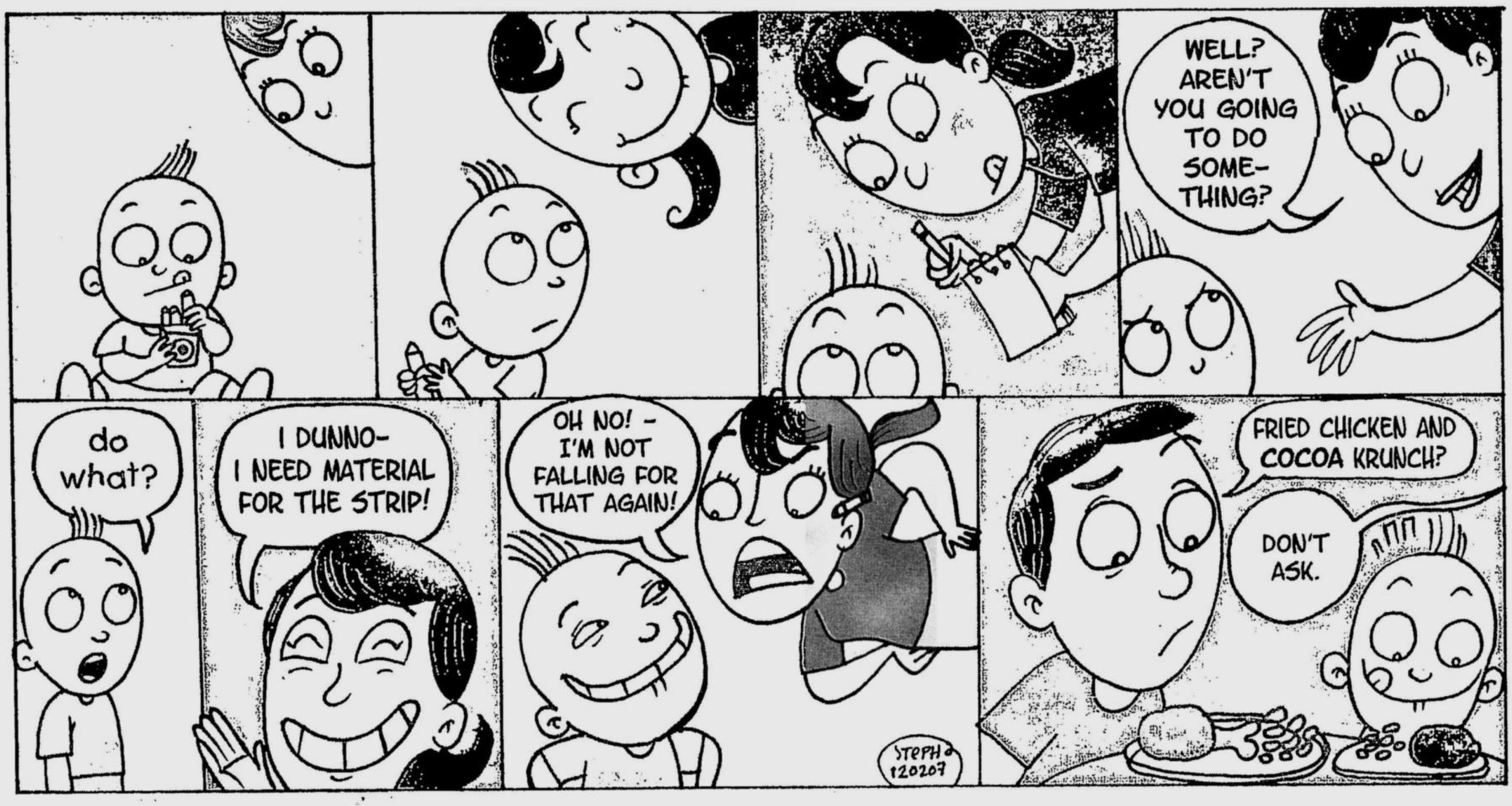
GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS



FULL HOUSE

STEPH BRAVO



Sunday INQUIRER magazine

FREE

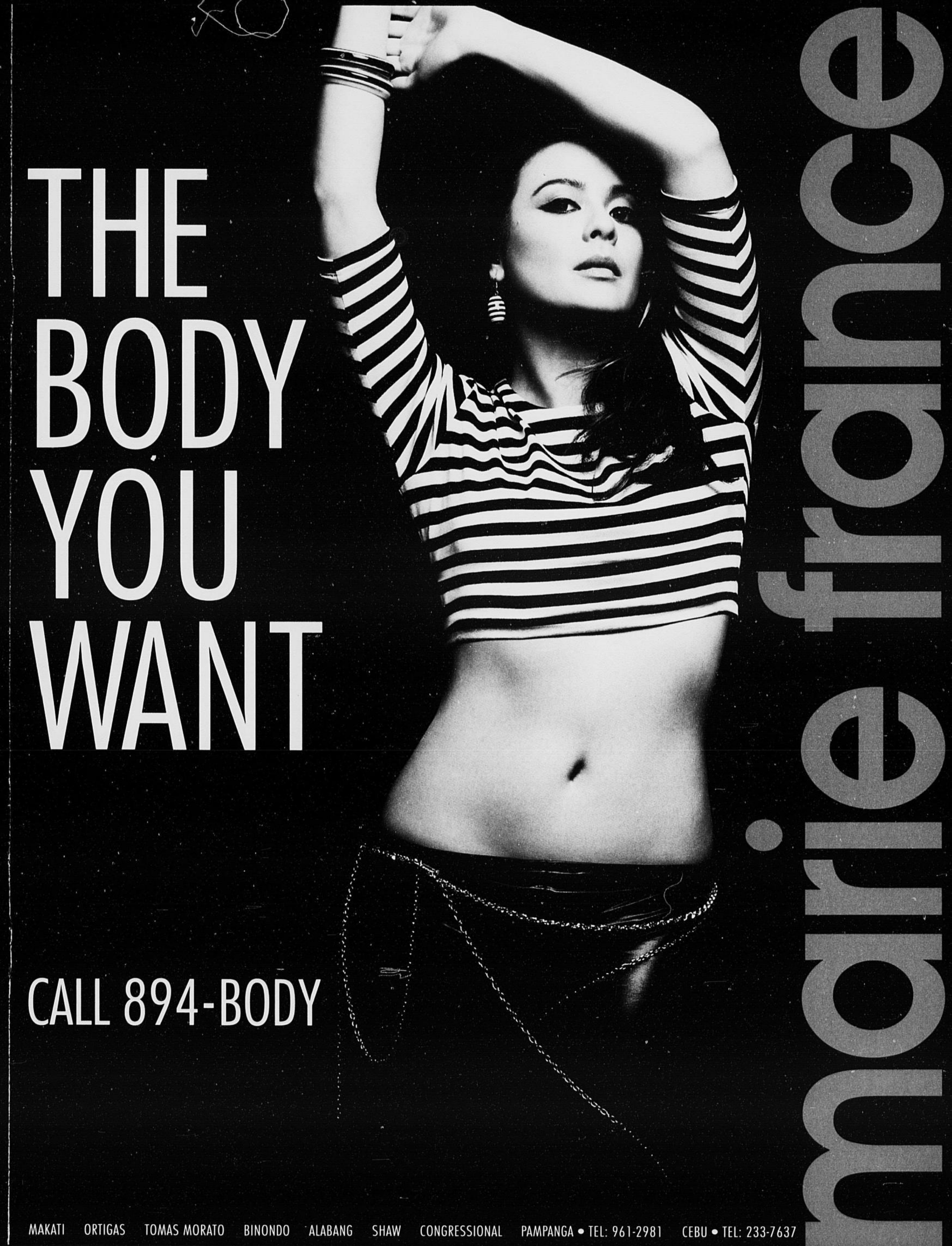
December 2, 2007

FRIDAY'S BEST

Bartending champ Matthew Burgos and 27 new dishes at TGI Friday's

+

mall nation
celebrity gift baskets
to mall--or not
more!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gold's gym

Essay
By Michael L. Tan

The Rise and Rise of the Mall

PDI Photo

I worry about a generation whose only source of recreation is the mall, with its mindless video games and movies. As such, malls allow city governments to abdicate their duty of building more outdoor playgrounds for children, as well as sports and art centers, and museums

PACO Underhill's "Call of the Mall" has a long prologue giving the many different reasons why people might end up going to the mall, a sample of which might resonate for many Filipinos: "We're here because we're bored;" "We're here because he needs underwear;" "We're looking for girls"—even the cryptic "We don't know why we're here," and "We're here because we're here."

Because we're here. Reminds me of how the English noun has become a Filipino verb: *mag-*mall *na tayo* (Let's go malling).

Malls began in America, with most historians agreeing that the first one was built in 1956. Big American cities had, and still have, department stores and shopping centers, but it was the rise of American suburbia that spurred the development of malls. These malls were developed by real estate agents, rather than merchants, who saw the potential of drawing a car-crazy nation of consumers to these enclosed shopping centers crammed with as many shops (and later, kiosks) as possible. For foreign visitors to the United States, the malls have become a symbol of America's capitalist prosperity, with its bewildering choices of shops and goods for consumers.

Ever ready to adopt anything American, it was not surprising that Filipinos caught mall fever fairly soon, with SM City in North EDSA being built in 1985. Today, the 10 largest malls in the world include three SM branches (SM Mall of Asia, SM Megamall and SM City North EDSA). The two biggest malls in the world are found in, of all places, socialist China, even while in capitalist America, the market for malls has become saturated, with retailers now slowly moving into off-mall operations.

In the Philippines, malls have cropped up both in city centers and in the suburbs, and there seems to be no end in sight just yet for more malls rising. After all, malls have become one-stop centers for different needs: groceries, entertainment, dining out, medical consultation, beauty treatment, even religious worship. The appeal of the mall comes, too, from its relative safety: no need to worry about vehicular traffic, and while pickpockets and scam artists abound as well in these air-conditioned places, the possibility of an armed heist seems more remote.

All our malls cater to the Filipino penchant for splurging to celebrate special occasions: a birthday, a promotion, a graduation, a homecoming for an overseas worker (charged, of course, to the *balikbayan*). I sometimes wonder how malls would survive if it were not for returning OFWs, who tend to spend the bigger bucks on home furnishings and appliances.

City governments love malls for the taxes they bring in. They see malls as a sign of progress, new landmarks around which cities can plan their big events. I'm not as enthusiastic. I see malls as an urban blight that creates monstrous traffic jams. I know quite a few people who changed their mind about buying real estate east of Metro Manila (meaning Marikina, Antipolo and the towns of Rizal) because there's no way to get to these places without going through the gauntlet of malls along the way, each one further slowing down the already snail's pace traffic.

I worry too about how the malls peddle false dreams to small business people, who pay exorbitant rents for tiny kiosks, thinking they will get large volumes of buyers, only to close shop within a few weeks because the sales just can't keep up with the rent.

The malls represent an inappropriate US model of entrepreneurship. Instead of encouraging small and medium scale businesses through low-rent agoras and bazaars, we find the large franchises taking over, requiring large capital outlays.

Finally, I worry about a generation whose only source of recreation is the mall, with its mindless video games and movies. Even worse, malls allow city governments to abdicate their duty of building more outdoor playgrounds for children, as well as sports and art centers, and museums.

Still, I'd like to end with optimism. I see alternative models that encourage small businesses, like the many weekend markets. I also like Tiendesitas, a large commercial complex but with natural ventilation, a strong slant toward local products and a variety of social events. I've heard that the rent isn't too high, either. That is, if you can get through the long waiting list.

For better or for worse, malls have become our new plazas where people congregate and socialize. But whether they contribute to community solidarity, or convert us into a herd of shopping automatons, remains to be seen. •

First Person
By Elvira Mata

Nightmare Before Christmas

Why do I hate malls? Crowds. Crowds. And did I mention crowds?

"Shopping can be chaotic, tiring and frustrating."

IT'S that time of year when people generally lose good cheer and turn into killing machines because they're going to the mall for some shopping.

Me? I lose it as soon as I enter the parking lot.

Just a few weeks ago, my friend and I went to the mall, not knowing there was a sale. It was no ordinary sale—it was a three-day, mall-wide sale and it seemed like the entire population of Metro Manila decided to go to this particular mall on the same day we did.

So we couldn't find parking. My friend and I decided to split up and look for a spot. Me, in the car; she, on foot. After driving around in circles, I saw my friend standing in front of an empty parking slot, arguing with a driver who was trying to pull his car into the spot.

I thought my friend was going to lie down on the ground like protesting squatters do when the authorities start to demolish, er, relocate them to somewhere far, far away. Instead, she whipped out a P500-bill and sent the driver away. I thought that was a really smart move until she decided to stiff me with paying for half of the "get lost" money.

"But parking costs only P35 for the first four hours;" I protested.

"If you don't cough up the cash, that would be your Christmas present," she snapped back.

I haggled, gave her a hundred and extracted a promise that she would still consider giving me a Christmas present.

"Deal."

Anyone planning to enter a mall would have to go through a security check. This could go two ways—like a breeze, or like the guards are searching for a home-made bomb and suspect that the chemicals are hidden in your tampons.

Ewwww.

The following is a true story.

At the mall entrance, I offered my opened bag to a female guard who poked it with what looked like a plastic chopstick—hitting my cell phone—while eyeballing the male guard some three feet away and talking about who was dating whom in the agency.

Talk about security risqué.

But why do I hate malls?

Crowds. Crowds. And did I mention crowds?

Not only are there too many people, there are too many stores. In order to find one shop, I will have to walk through the entire mall to find it, passing by new establishments selling stuff I've never even heard of. Like Bulimia, which carries clothes for the underweight. Or Asylum, which carries stuff only crazy people would wear. Or Yagit, for flip-flops under P50.

(Attention, shoppers: I was just kidding. Those stores were made up; they don't really exist.)

The worst time to go to a mall is during weekends, the last few hours of a midnight madness sale or the last two weeks of December. Crunch time is usually around lunch. That's when parents bring their kids to the mall in an attempt to not cook at home, do some personal shopping and bond with the kids—oftentimes referred to as multi-tasking.

Sometimes parents and their progeny get so excited in the mall, they fall off escalators. Or kids get so overwhelmed, they stand frozen in their tracks and their feet get sucked into the metal maws of this contraption. Sad thing is, parents blame it on those fabulous rubber clogs (which come in bright colors and Jibbitz) which they stupidly bought for their kids.

Now here's a novel idea: Leave the kids at home.

Shopping can be chaotic, tiring and frustrating. Just imagine how much more of an ordeal it is to a young child dragged from one store to the next as parents go through their Christmas list. Malls too would be a barf-free, soiled diaper-free and generally a better place without tiny tots sticking their fingers up their noses and touching the merchandise.

Next to children wailing in the mall, I hate the long lines at the gift-wrapping counter, at the cashier, to the restroom and at the taxi curb. I also hate those pedestrian traps where men and women in suits lie in wait to spray perfume on you, or sell you insurance, or yet another credit card, or even a condo unit somewhere far, far away like Patikul, Sulu.

But the worst, worst thing I hate about the mall?

They're playing Christmas carols. Non-stop. •

First Person

By Rina Jimenez David

Confessions of a Mall Rat

Our government may suck, we may bungle things like flood control and traffic management and remain a chronically poor country. But I have always believed that we excel in the running of humongous malls

SOME people go to malls to escape the heat, go boy- or girl-watching, or just check out the merchandise in the shops. I go to malls to take a vacation from being Filipino.

I remember my dismay some years ago upon hearing news that a bank robbery had taken place inside Megamall. "Oh no!" I exclaimed, "Why did it have to happen in the one place where we got it right?!" Our government may suck, we may bungle things like flood control and traffic management, and we may remain a chronically poor country. But I have always believed that we excel in the running of humongous malls.

Today, not even the explosion (or bombing, whatever theory you believe) at Glorietta 2 has dampened my faith in malls. I go to malls because they are controlled environments where we enjoy not just a regulated climate and orderly pedestrian traffic, but a setting where no surprises await us (give or take a big bang or two). We know what to expect at a mall: we have our favorite restaurants, shops, even stalls where we can get everything, from duplicate keys to ersatz designer scents. Of course the usual bane of urban existence can also be found inside malls: pickpockets, flashers, and for a while there, even kidnappers who lured children into restrooms and held them ransom until their parents withdrew the amount demanded from nearby ATMs.

So it's not as if I believe a mall is paradise on earth. But it's the closest thing to the proverbial "clean, well-lighted place" that offers sanctuary from the stress and uncertainties of urban living. Someone once likened malls to the town plazas of yore, where citizens could mingle and create a sense of community, even if the folks congregating in their air-conditioned interiors are all strangers to each other.

But I like it that way. I like the impersonality and anonymity afforded by malling. I like the way mall-goers mind their own business, allowing each other space to run their errands or just kill time. Believe me, there is no better place for whiling away time between appointments, or racing through one's errands in an hour or two.

PDI Photos

The Podium: Author's choice

But this mall rat is a choosy vermin, too. There are malls and there are malls, and some I like simply because they are so familiar I can navigate through them blindfolded, and others because they are actually cozy.

We must have been one of the earliest patrons of Megamall, mainly because it was just across the street from San Miguel Corp. where the hubby used to work until his retirement. We would usually meet there for a lunchtime rendezvous or for synchronizing our after-work commutes. As a consequence, we got to know the lay-out by heart, even if shops have come and gone with such dizzying frequency. The Mall of Asia is of course much bigger, the number of restaurants and shops so many they fade away into a blur. And that's the problem. I happen to think Megamall, the first of the super-malls in the country, got the size just right: big enough to accommodate a wide variety of establishments, all of which are still accessible on foot.

But it's the nearby Podium, which seeks to attract a higher-end market, which we—that is, my daughter and I—truly love. It's a "boutique" mall, with just a few shops, but such is the quality of the merchandise that we just have to make regular stops on our window-shopping tours. In contrast to the megaplexes, the Podium also has just two cinemas, so going to the movies there means shorter lines and very comfortable seats.

The theaters are also the main draw, at least for my family, of Eastwood City. It also happens to be nearer our home, so it's possible to have early dinner at home then jump into the car for a late movie. One caveat: make sure to bring sweaters because the Eastwood Cinemas are positively polar. The kids also enjoy Eastwood for the street ambience, especially late at night when employees from nearby call centers congregate over beers and lattes and live band music.

I may visit it less frequently now, but Power Plant remains a favorite. My daughter and I can't visit the mall without "paying homage" to the shoes at Nine West or CMG, or even, would you believe, the bins and organizers at Make Room. Power Plant also happens to have the best array of restaurants in the basement, which manage to offer very good food—bordering on gourmet dining—at very reasonable prices and in a pleasant ambience which on good days includes piano and saxophone music.

Serendra and Bonifacio High Street at The Fort are not exactly a mall—Market! Market! better fulfills the criteria—but both have become our new stomping grounds. This is one place where one can truly forget one's Third World roots, what with the posh restaurants, mosaic fountains, outdoor sculpture, and manicured lawns between the low-rise buildings. A place after my own heart is Fully Booked, all five floors of it devoted to books, periodicals, stationery, CDs and coffee. "Mom, I know now where I want to be at the end of the world," my Lit major daughter exclaimed the first time we entered it.

The thing about seeking a vacation from being Filipino, though, is that the sabbatical is always too brief. After a few hours, the short respite has to come to an end, and just a few steps away from the doors of a mall is life in the Philippines in all its messy, polluted, chaotic and unpredictable reality. A comforting thought, however, is that there are malls scattered throughout the archipelago. Big or small, high-end or low-rent, they always keep their doors open for rats seeking escape from, well, the rat-race! •

Menu

Text and photos by Margaux Salcedo

Bellissimo, with a Touch of Montano

All in all, a hearty experience for a reasonable price. And talk about personal touch: we were greeted by Cesar Montano himself, who later stopped at our table to chat and join us

TISHA* is a tall, sleek, Manolo-wearing, Chanel-carrying stunner. She is also a movie buff and a food and wine lover.

"I want to try that restaurant of Cesar Montano," she declared one day. Martin*, the love of her life, obliged. Always eager to try a new restaurant, I gladly played third wheel. I had seen the restaurant featured on Susan Enriquez's television show and was curious to see the art on its walls, that are by Montano himself, as well as the food, of course.

Not too familiar with Quezon City, we almost didn't make it, circling the Scout streets a few times and asking for directions, before finding the Bellissimo sign, which is closer to the far end of Morato (near E. Rodriguez) than we expected. By this time, exasperated from the hunt, we would have eaten the guests alive. But all exasperation was washed away once we stepped into the restaurant as we were greeted at the door by the most beautiful man who ever walked the earth—Cesar Montano himself! Talk about a personal touch. I was impressed. We knew he owned the restaurant but we did not expect him to actually be there, attending to guests. That was a most unexpected and delightful surprise.

We were handed menus by his daughter, Angela, who manages the restaurant with her husband, Christopher Canlas. A waitress followed to assist us as Angela left to tend the cash register. "Ma'am, try Aglio Olio," she suggested. We obliged. I had actually wanted to start with their appetizer called Clyde's Crabs but it was out of stock as, a waiter explained, the last pieces were "consumed by Kris Aquino yesterday," so we skipped that part of dinner and went straight to pizza, pasta and wine.

A bite into the pizza and I fell in love. "I have always been into breads," Montano explained when he stopped by later to chat. I took advantage of the opportunity to slyly interview him. "When I was just a child, I would go to our neighborhood *panaderia* (baker) and volunteer to assist in making the bread. I was so fascinated by how bread is made, how they make it rise,

Worth a try: Aglio Olio pasta (top); Montano (above): should have been on the dessert menu.

how it takes its shape. Years later, I had my first taste of real Itaian pizza in Italy, and my passion for bread-making was sparked all over again. That inspired me to put up my own Italian restaurant."

Indeed, Montano's personal touches are all over the place. He selected the brick veneer himself. He commissioned some carpenters from a nearby province to make the tables and chairs. A table on the second floor has been autographed by his friend, "Pulp Fiction"and "Kill Bill" creator and director Quentin Tarantino, who wrote a short but glowing comment on the restaurant. And Montano's own books on Italy are on display on the ground floor. "I wanted the place to have the feel of a small, authentic Italian restaurant," Montano said of the decor. A wall with black and white photographs of gangster movies and a display of his wine and Italian bread collection, albeit lean, underline this intention and help achieve the effect.

So does the menu. The menu has an extensive selection of pizzas and pastas, mostly for the price of P330, in sizes good for two. Staple Italian favorites like pizza margherita or spaghetti carbonara are present alongside Bellissimo's own creations, such as the Sicily Pizza, which has anchovies and sundried tomatoes, or the Spaghetti Mafiosi, which has anchovies and sardines. The pizzas, without a doubt, upstage the pastas. The crust is slightly crispy at the bottom without making the entire pizza crunchy, maintaining the chewiness of the dough, an effect that is not as easy to achieve as it looks. On my way out on my last visit, I realized how this effect was accomplished by Bellissimo: the restaurant has its own traditional wood-fired brick oven. You can really taste the difference when something is cooked using wood. That ol' neighborhood baker with whom Montano hang out as a kid would be proud.

Aside from the dough, I also appreciated the flavors of the pizzas. I particularly liked the bite of sun-dried tomatoes against anchovies on the Sicily Pizza. The Gorgonzola Pizza was a surprising delight as well, although I may be biased on this one—I have a soft spot in my heart developing into a large soft spot in my midsection (a.k.a. "*bilbil*") from blue cheese!

The pastas were filling although hit and miss. The Aglio Olio, recommended without fail by every waitress on every visit, is worth a try. It is heartwarmingly tasty without being too oily. The carbonara is also very delicious and a fail-safe order, though some might argue that it is not authentic Italian carbonara, as it uses white sauce. I have learned from some purists that real Italian carbonara simply uses eggs and bacon—no need for cream! But we're not in Italy here, feeling *lang*... so pile on the cream as long as it hits the right spot!

In fact, some pastas do cater more to the Filipino palate. The complimentary bread, which is also made in their kitchen, leans on sweet. The Pasta Montano, which the menu describes as "tri-color fusilli with sausage, bell pepper, cheese, pepperoni and salami," lacked the salty and spicy bites expected from Italian sausage and pepperoni. But I realized that this was because the order, as served, did not have them. That was quite sad, actually, as the inclusion of these two ingredients would have given the Pasta Montano the "Wow!" factor it could potentially evoke. On better days, though, the ingredients are complete, and given that the Italian sausage they have at this restaurant is impressive, just remember to ask the waitress before ordering if all the ingredients are present in their kitchen. Ideally, of course, you shouldn't have to ask. If it was Michael Corleone they had served the incomplete dish to, he might be caught in this scenario in quiet rage, saying, "Don't tell me this has pepperoni because it insults my intelligence and it makes me very angry."

For the boys, just understand that the restaurant may still be experiencing birthing pains. They opened only last July. For the girls, well, one look at the real Montano could make your anger go away. He may even actually join you for dinner, as he did our group on that first visit, while making his rounds of hi's and hello's. Stylish Tisha, who can get away with anything, teased, "Margaux thinks you should be on the menu... for dessert." I wanted to hide under the pizza!

Real dessert was as yummy as the eye candy before us. Again, many items on the dessert menu were not available, such as the Mango Tango and the Sans Rival. But they always have the Tiramisu, which is quite a pleasant experience because it is only mildly on the sweet side. It is also circled with mini broas for added texture, bringing another dimension to the tiramisu experience.

All in all, the restaurant offers a hearty experience at very reasonable prices. It has a

(continued on page 12)

3 China Poems

By Marne L. Kilates

1. First Glimpse

A bird flies across Erhai Lake
And I am sailing on a boat.
I wonder where it comes from,
How long it flies before it tires
And looks for solid earth.

Clouds touch the Cangshan peaks,
My soul is touched by water.
The November wind chills my breath,
But this first glimpse of China
Warms my heart like an embrace.

2. Crossing-the-Bridge Noodles[1]

Men are mountains, women are clouds.

My love labors to become a scribe,
Rehearsing his hand, perfecting his calligraphy.
Already he has become an island,
Remote as the Emperor he wants to serve,
Distant as the walls of the capital city.

Daily I sing to him with my bamboo flute,
And strike the sweetest notes on my gourd.
Only the bamboo bridge tied with twine
Takes me to him—I and my steaming bowl
Of rice noodles, to appease his constant hunger.

But one day he asks me to share his meal,
And I find how he has enriched my love.
With every herb and grub and every bit
And bite of the earth's good fruits, he had
Spiced up my humble chicken stock.

O I had thought only the clouds
Are familiar with him—he and his dream
Of scrolls and emperors. Long after
I'd hied him off to far Changan, I shall forever
Reach him on my bridge of bamboo and twine,
And wafts of my steaming chicken stock.

3. South of the Clouds[2]

Between Kunming and Dali
On Chuda Highway,
I catch a glimpse of China
Writing her destiny
Like the strokes of elegant calligraphy.

Tar and concrete
Lined with rails of aluminum,
Under the whine of rubber,
The highway wipes itself
Into the countryside,
Turning and twisting
Across slopes of pine and eucalyptus,
Leaping over rivers,
Spinning into gullies,
Racing and twining with the railroad,
Edging and cutting into mountains,
Washing and smearing into the mist,
Vanishing into the clouds.

Past hamlets of mud and brick houses,
Endless croplands and mounds
Of harvest and hay
Baking under the Yunnan sun,
It sweeps me into the smoke and dust
Of sudden cities,
Into squares and monuments
Caught in the grappling
And shedding of centuries,
Into the utter strangeness
Of courtyards and old quarters struggling
Against the new scripts of modernity:
Bai maidens dancing a lost culture,
The imperial feasts of twelve-course lauriats,
The heady toasts of mao tai and brandy,
The tinkle of porcelain in the serving of tea,
The hurried departures
For the next encounter with history.

Between Kunming and Dali,
In China's vast hinterland
South of the Clouds,
I am cast outside the realm of words
Where landscape is the only language.
And I am tempted
By this anonymity and smallness
Of tourists and exiles:
The mind, seduced, hurtles
Into the borderless cavern of distance,
Where I become a mere echo of myself,
Bouncing off the stare of strangers,
Smiling and bowing my thanks
For a handful of souvenirs,
The grace of precious memory.

Yunnan Province, November 2000

[1] The chicken stock arrives first. Then plate upon plate of exotic dish. But one must keep his hands off as the waiter drops each slice, dollop and dumpling into the steaming center bowl. Then the famous noodles. This as one's host recounts the legend, at the Over the Bridge Restaurant in Kunming.

[2] Literal translation of "Yunnan"

3 China Poems

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Feature

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

An Early—and Bountiful—Christmas

With OFW remittances hitting $11 billion as of September and much of it spent on high-end items from clothes to gadgets to home décor, the retail sector is expecting its best Christmas ever in 20 years

THANK God for Filipinos either living or working overseas.

Because of the money that they send to the country—close to $11 billion as of end-September this year—the wheels of the country's economy will surely keep turning. Add that to the money generated within the Philippines, and it all comes to a robust retail sector.

Experts observe that the Philippines is a consumer-driven society, with remittances from abroad promptly spent on needs and wants. A good part of that money ends up in the malls, easily the Filipinos' favorite destination these days.

For Robinsons Department Store (RDS), that means more money spent on skinny jeans and tunic tops, especially those of shiny and metallic fabric, easily their topsellers for the year, according to Preachy J. Zorrilla, RDS' assistant vice president for merchandising.

"Tops and dresses with ruffles, balloon sleeves, banded cuffs and hemlines dominated the look this year," notes Zorrilla. Jewel necklines in plain and exuberant fabrics were also runaway favorites among fashionistas, she adds. She observes that two markets emerged this year—the "fashionable" set that goes to specialty stores or boutiques, and the more budget-conscious who frequent sales events or *tiangges*.

For Festival Supermall, computers and gadgets proved to be topsellers this year, says Eli Peralta, the mall's leasing division manager. Doing just as well were salon and spa services, with clothes, apparel and shoes coming in a close third.

As for Gateway Mall, the food sector is a consistent top money earner, followed by gadgets and jewelry. Says Belle Baldoza of the Araneta group's communications department: "Fashion is experiencing a slight slump, particularly luxury brands, probably because of better merchandising in department stores that offer stylish but more affordable choices."

Home wares have also dropped from most shopping lists, observes Jojo de Guzman, assistant vice president for operations of the Waltermart group. And while high-end brands

Topsellers: High-end consumer goods are enjoying brisk sales

enjoyed better sales than usual, mid-market items were not moving fast enough.

Says De Guzman: "Those in the aspirational market are now spending P1,000 more just to get the preferred foreign brands perceived to be more hip and fashionable, thus leaving the middle-market Filipino brands out in the cold. Hopefully, this is a temporary situation."

Anton Huang, executive vice president of Stores Specialists Inc., which brought in a lot of top foreign brands to the Philippines, shares the view that high-end brands have been doing well this year. Spanish clothing chain Zara is a good example, he cites.

"Zara came to the Philippines with a bang. It has been in the market for two years now and has been performing beyond our expectations," says Huang. To date, Zara has five outlets, with two more stores set to open soon, he adds.

Calvin Klein and Marks & Spencer are the other two foreign brands that are doing very well, says Huang. "Marks & Spencer has been performing consistently well. Its classic pieces are always a favorite among the more conservative contemporary casual dressers," he notes. Other top performing brands are Nine West, footwear brand Ecco, and the high-fashion brands Gucci, Bottega Veneta and Prada.

With more overseas Filipino workers and *balikbayans* expected to arrive in time for Christmas, the malls are justifiably looking forward to a profitable season.

Lani Castañeda, marketing services manager of True Value, notes that the Christmas season is the time of year when people splurge not only on themselves but also on others. "This is also the time when people, whatever economic class they belong to, willingly spend for home improvement. There is always a good feeling associated with improving your home during the holiday season. Consumers also try to upgrade their Christmas decor every year," adds Castañeda.

Waltermart's De Guzman echoes the sentiment. "This year, we expect Christmas shopping to start earlier. More OFWs are sending their money as early as November to enjoy a better conversion rate for their dollars. Come December, more *balikbayans* will be home and are expected to spend yet more money to celebrate Christmas with their loved ones. The retail industry is expected to enjoy its best Christmas ever in 20 years," De Guzman predicts. •

Photos by August de la Cruz

Friday's Best

Check out the 27 new reasons why you should head for Friday's today

EXCEPT for the fact that 9 x 3 = 27, the number hardly means anything to most people. But that is about to change—for the adventurous diners among us, at least.

As part of an international menu enhancement program, TGI Friday's—the fun and hip casual dining restaurant—rolled out not one, not two, but 27 new lip-smacking dishes. The 27 new favorites, which will be served worldwide, include healthier treats like more salad choices and lighter sandwiches for those who want to keep fit.

Barely a month has passed since the new dishes were introduced and already people have been raving about the new offerings. "We know that TGI Friday's regulars have always had their all-time favorites, but these 27 mouth-watering new treats will be an added attraction for those who love hanging out at the restaurant," shares Lisa Ronquillo, TGI Friday's marketing director.

With 17 new dishes to try, there isn't a better time to enjoy a TGI Friday's meal than now. If you don't mind slightly chewy meat (because you go for flavorful cuts that are the leanest and most exercised), then you should try the Flaming Beef Kabobs: lean cuts of steak char-grilled just right so every juicy bite melts in your mouth. And that's not all—this knock-out of an entrée is served on a bed of wild coconut rice with fresh mango-chili salsa for dipping.

There's also Sizzling Chicken & Shrimp, sauteed chicken breast with onions, peppers and zesty shrimp in a Roma tomato-basil salsa. All served over sizzling Colby and Monterey Jack cheeses with a side of cheddar cheese mashed potatoes.

Or you may want to sample Chicken Club Sandwich. Layers of ham, char-grilled chicken breast, American cheese and crisp bacon piled double high between three slices of honey wheat bread with fresh lettuce, tomato and mayonnaise.

These are just three of the 27 new and exciting dishes you'll find irresistible at TGI Friday's. There are 24 other must-try menu items to keep you drooling for more. So, if you haven't been to Friday's lately, maybe it's time you drop by. •

TGI Friday's is now serving its 27 new dishes at all TGI Friday's restaurants, located at Alabang Town Center, Glorietta 3, Tomas Morato, Robinsons Manila, Robinsons Galleria, Bonifacio High Street, Sta. Lucia and very soon, at Trinoma.

Juggling Work and Art

TGI Friday's bartender Matthew Burgos has enough reason to walk on air these days. He has just put the Philippines on the map by bagging the Asia-Pacific Bartending Championship.

Burgos, a TGI Friday's bartender at the Robinsons Galleria branch, was hailed as grand champion in the Asia-Pacific Bartending Championships held in Beijing, China last October 30. The triumphant bartender, who proved once more that Filipino talent is truly world class, bested nine other contestants from the Asia-Pacific region after undergoing a rigorous two-month training under Eric Martinez. Martinez, who is from TGI Friday's Glorietta, was hailed as the World's Greatest Bartender in the World Bartending Championships in Las Vegas last March.

The competition consisted of two intense and rigorous segments—compulsory and freestyle. The compulsory segment has the master mixologists going through a series of activities that test their mastery of bar mechanics, including technical knowledge, skill and accuracy. The freestyle segment deals with "flair bartending," skills-tossing, balancing, mixing and flipping cocktails and bottles in the air.

In March 2008, Burgos will move on to the World Championships to be held in Las Vegas. •

Feature

By Tony M. Maghirang

Hidden Persuaders

Another excuse when you find yourself having second thoughts about the goods you've bought: the mall's piped-in music made you do it

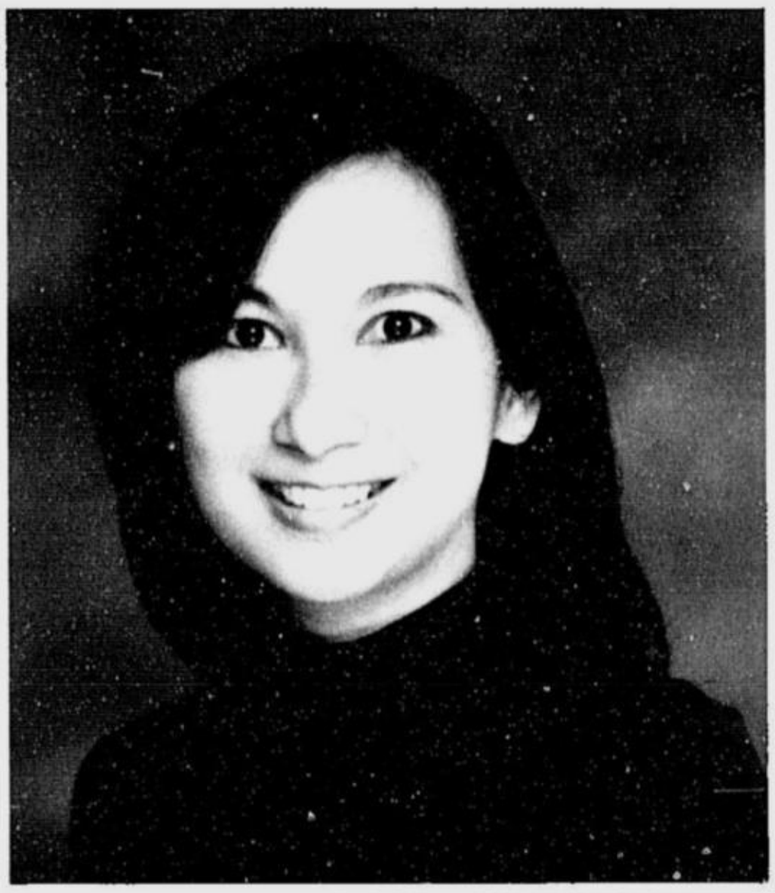
THE first time Edge Pamute had coffee in this famous chain, he found himself coming to a slow boil. What started as a brief stop for a relaxing cup of java turned into aggravation as he endured the loud metallic music being played at lunchtime. When the manager apologized for his choice of sounds, this disc jockey realized he could do better. He then offered to provide appropriate pre-programmed music for the coffee shop for ten days for free. If management found reason to continue the service, the store would then have to pay for the next set of music programs. Needless to say, Edge has been programming the sound environment for that café ever since.

DJ Edge calls his craft sound architecture, a subtle way of using music to control the flow of people in and out of selected establishments. He supplies the likes of Seattle's Best Coffee with a daily music program designed to persuade customers to stay longer or move faster, depending on the time of day. With the limited legroom in most coffee shops, Edge's conceptual approach allows for more productive use of space.

Good sounds, the aroma of baking bread, the soothing dim light in a spa, the lack of perceptible clocks or timepieces in a mall, the use of flattering mirrors in a dressing room, and the reddish light over food displays are some of the more subtle ways to control customer behavior in a mall. Most of them are aimed at making people stay longer in the shopping area, the better for them to see—and hopefully desire, and thus buy—more merchandise.

Music, says Dr. Regina "Gina" Hechanova, associate professor in psychology and director of the Center for Organization Research and Development (CORD) at the Ateneo de Manila, is one of the strongest persuaders. Studies have shown that the nature of music affects how much time people will spend in a store, Hechanova adds. When the background music is slow, customers spend more time in a particular store or outlet. In fast food restaurants, on the other hand, quicker paced music may be more appropriate to induce a faster turnover of patrons.

Hechanova has a problem, though, with persuasive music in most malls. She argues,



Hechanova: Some malls have too high a noise level

"Some stores don't necessarily regulate the music so that you have in-house piped in music plus music from individual stores competing for attention in terms of volume. This can create a sense of chaos rather than order. Personally, I don't go to certain malls because I find the level of noise in them too much."

Creating a store environment that will entice customers to enter and linger in a store is just one aspect of attracting them to buy. The location, layout and appeal to the senses are other important factors.

Naturally, the product itself should have certain characteristics that not only predispose shoppers to want it, but also to make it stand out from the gazillion of other goods in a store. Hechanova explains that the packaging and the correct combination of colors can also determine the attractiveness of an item to transient mall shoppers. Yellow, for instance, is the fastest color that the eye can see. It's the chief reason behind yellow pedestrian lanes and Post-It notes.

The doctor adds, "Even color shades are important. Darker hues are more attractive to older markets. Conversely, younger consumers are more receptive to lighter and brighter hues. That is why we sometimes see manufacturers adapt their packaging and color scheme to what best attracts their desired market."

She points out how Apple, the computer company behind the Mac, captured the imagination of a new generation of consumers through its colored iPods and iMacs. She theorizes, "The more predominant thought today is that there isn't a one-size-fits-all approach to marketing. Consumer needs will differ depending on a number of factors—culture, age, gender, location, weather, etc. For example, there are products that will sell in one country and not in another. What is important is for marketers to understand who their market is and the needs and preferences of that market."

The tastes of Filipinos have also changed significantly over the years to influence the manner of attracting local consumers to products and even the places that sell them. Globalization, new technologies, instantaneous communication and ease of travel make it easy for new trends to reach the country in record time.

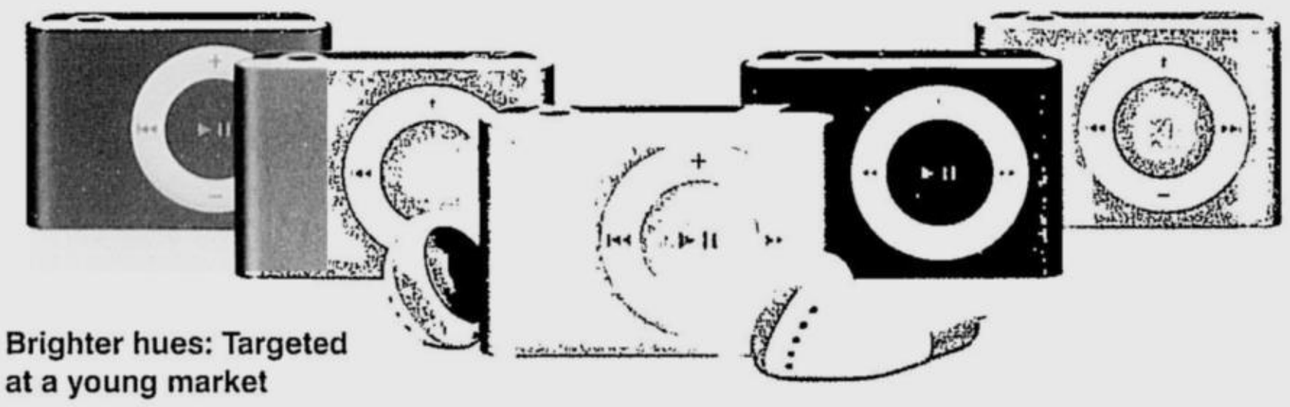
One mall claiming to be one of the largest malls in the world suggests that local businesses are competing not only against each other but also with those in other countries. Smaller-scale shopping centers such as Tiendesitas appear to have adopted store concepts emanating from other Asian countries.

Nowadays, people are attracted to brands and products that are globally distributed. Men now buy personal care products or go to spas—activities which, two generations ago, were unthinkable. These remarkable shifts in consumption patterns are by-products of increasing consumerism and exposure to other cultures.

In the advent of modern persuasion media, the old maxim that "sex sells" still carries some weight. An ad for whitening cream comes with the unblemished back of an obviously half-naked young woman. The display window of a clothing company has a poster of a muscled young man with a bulge where the zipper should be. The hint of sex echoes with the oh-so-Seventies idea of subliminal seduction.

But Hechanova clarifies, "While research studies confirm that sexy ads attract attention and enhance recall, very explicit ads can also backfire on the advertiser or the store for that matter. The more nudity used, the less attention is paid to the ad message. Generally, the sex hook should be appropriate to the product. It wouldn't look good to use sex in selling hospital services, for instance."

But definitely, persuasion is part and parcel of selling a product and a crucial factor in making a choice. Whether the enticing sounds and images of commerce are good enough, however, is something that the consumer alone can decide. •



Brighter hues: Targeted at a young market

Feature

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

Baskets of Glad Tidings and Good Cheer

Green tea and foie gras for Sharon, pistachio nuts for Gary V—what the stars might want in their gift baskets, according to their managers

Courtesy of Rustan's

Suggested gift basket for the health nut

WHAT do you give someone who has almost everything? What else can spark a light of anticipation in the eyes of Sharon Cuneta, Gary Valenciano, Manny Pacquiao, Iza Calzado, Angel Locsin, Jaclyn Jose, Dingdong Dantes and Afred Vargas?

SIM turned to their managers for answers and came up with a gift list that should also prove helpful to diabetics (like Gary V), pesco-vegetarians (which Iza and Dingdong are), athletes (like Pacquiao), and those who are perennially on a weight-loss regimen (like Sharon and Jaclyn).

If she were to assemble a gift basket for Angel Locsin, Becky Aguila would pull out all the stops for a Noche Buena feast, while Sandra Chavez would thoughtfully consider Sharon Cuneta's strict low-sugar/no-fat diet program. But since it's Christmas, she'd also include the Megastar's favorite dishes, like a suckling *lechon*.

As for Pac Man, business manager Eric Pineda would stuff a basket with Spanish bread and durian to make the champ really happy.

Controversial star builder Lolit Solis meanwhile eyes a month's supply of junk food for her ward Alfred Vargas because she gets these items free from one of the sponsors of her show, she explains unabashedly.

But there's more to gift baskets than food, material goods and possessions, managers Ed Instrella and Perry Lansigan assert. His gifts would be for Dingdong and his entire family, Lansigan says.

As for Jaclyn, she needs a genie to fulfill her most ardent wishes, jokes Instrella. Says Ida Henares of her list for Iza: "These are body, mind and spirit gifts."

For these managers at least, it's not just the thought that counts.

Sharon Cuneta's gift basket would contain:

Healthy cheeses like blue cheese, rye or wheat crackers, low-fat fresh milk, diet cereals, sweet seedless grapes, sugar-free jam, yogurt, green tea, foie gras, roasted suckling pig, decadent cheesecake or chocolate cake.

Manager Angeli Pangilinan would stuff Gary V's gift basket with the following: a bag of pistachio nuts, a bike shirt, Joel Osteen's new book "Become a Better You," sugar free gum, new prescription glasses from Vivian Sarabia, accessories from Refill, iPod accessories, a brand new set of wedding bands (they lost theirs in Puerto Rico and the Philippines), a new insulin pump, a bag of cherries, a book by Myles Munroe, the newest version of Protools software, a frame with their latest family picture, and the latest Apple MacBook Pro.

To Angel Locsin, from Becky Aguila: a basketful of ingredients for *sinigang na baboy, adobong manok*, spaghetti, *lechon kawali*, fried chicken, *sugpo*, hamburger and fries, hotdog on a stick, fishballs, tuna sandwich, leg of ham, *queso de bola, lanzones*, grapes, chocolate bar with almonds, Chippy (red), Jack 'n' Jill Potato Chips, Lays Potato Chips, Picnic.

To Iza Calzado, from Ida Henares: fruits, cheese and melba toast, a diary or gratitude journal, a Bible, beauty and body products, soft shirt nightie, aromatherapy candles and a foot soak. For Iza's dad: pate, roast chicken or turkey. Instrella would gift Jaclyn Jose with lots of fresh fruits, a plasma TV, an Asian dining and living room set, an Asian bedroom showcase, garden tools, flowering plants and seeds, a new family car, a gift certificate for a resort vacation and a slimming program, a fully furnished dream home, a movie and TV contract, and a college education plan for her kids.

Manny Pacquiao's bound to find this in his gift basket from Eric Pineda: red wine, queso de bola, Spanish bread, smoked salmon, durian, DVD encyclopedia, gold rosary, beef jerky, Healthy Options Mega Vitamins, assorted hard candies, gold money clip, Bulgari men's cologne.

To Dingdong Dantes, from Perry Lansigan: fruits, shades, belts, steamed fish, steamed veggies, *papaitan*, framed family picture, roundtrip tickets for two to anywhere in Asia, Tumi bag, perfume, car accessories.

Lolit Solis' gift basket for Alfred Vargas would have the following: a dream house, the right girl, a new show with him in the lead, pocket video game, DVD movies directed by Lino Brocka and Ishmael Bernal, a cookbook, a month's supply of junk food, *parol*, a cross necklace, shades, luxury cruise tickets, and more *datung* (cash). •

SUDOKU

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

	1					2		
				9			7	6
8		3		5				
					9	3		
4								8
		7	3					
				8		6		9
2	6			1				
		4					2	

Difficulty Level ★★★★★ Answers in PDI, Dec. 3 issue 12/02

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Answer to previous puzzle

6	1	5	9	3	7	4	8	2
4	3	7	6	8	2	1	5	9
9	2	8	4	1	5	6	3	7
5	4	3	1	2	8	9	7	6
8	6	2	7	4	9	5	1	3
7	9	1	3	5	6	8	2	4
1	7	9	8	6	3	2	4	5
2	8	6	5	7	4	3	9	1
3	5	4	2	9	1	7	6	8

Difficulty Level ★★★★ PDI, Dec. 1 12/0

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Bellissimo, with a Touch of Montano (from page 6)

Pizza from wood-fired brick oven

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**Not their real names.*

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4: Estimated total revenue in billion pesos of Ayala's shopping centers during the first half of 2007

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550: Number of retail stores in Trinoma

3,000+: Number of available parking spaces in Trinoma

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Compiled by Kate Pedroso, Inquirer Research
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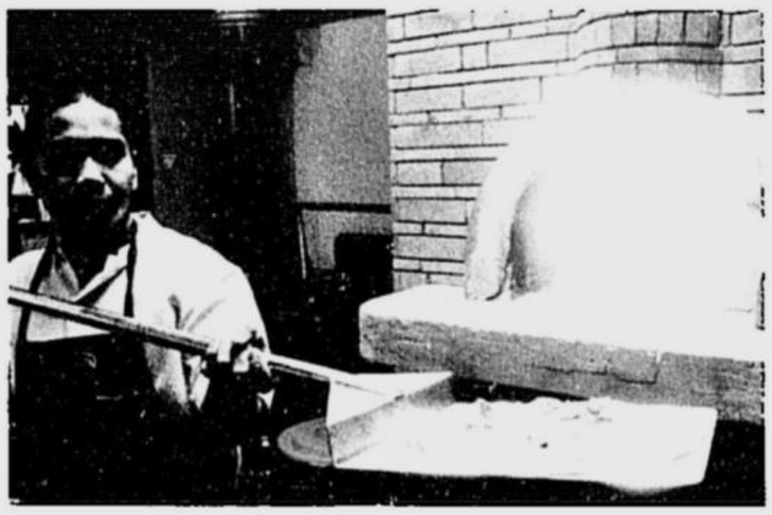

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My Father, My Hero

THE sense of pride is unmistakable: "For friend and foe alike, his surliness was legendary," writes Red Constantino of his father, RC, who led a protest march toward the Batasang Pambansa during a State of the Nation Address almost a decade ago. Warned by the Secretary of Justice that the freedom to assemble, march and express themselves had limits, RC Constantino forged ahead.

"The warning he took as an incentive," continues Red of his father, going on to describe how the staunch oppositionist proceeded to march with his group through five menacing police barricades, unmindful of the water cannons and the truncheon-wielding crowd dispersal units. "At the last barricade, bruised and bloodied, he went straight to the line of shields, thrust his head right in front of the helmeted police, pulled the guy's truncheon and dared him to hit him on the head as the other policemen had done in the barricades they had just passed. The policeman stared at him, completely befuddled by this activist's impudence. No other truncheon was used again that day."

Clearly, the 60-year-old RC, "a warrior in retirement," who has been hailed and dissed for "his singularly belligerent and mordant brand of activism," remains very much a hero in the eyes of his children, the finest tribute that most men secretly long for.

Because for all the accolades that the man of the house receives for his endeavors, what resonates best is being treasured by one's family, and regarded with affection and fondness by one's progeny.

That, in brief, describes what "Our Father" is all about: 62 captains of industry, activists, community leaders, entrepreneurs, professionals, actors and musicians, so honored by their children in words as burnished as the photographs by fashion lensman Jun de Leon.

As the foreword explains: "All the fathers are extremely passionate about making a difference in their workplace and in society. Yet, despite being successful in their chosen fields, each father has attested to the fact that nothing can compare to the fulfillment they derive from making a positive impact in their children's lives."

Which is exactly how Vivienne Tan describes her father's best legacy. Vivienne recalls how her dad, industrialist Lucio Tan, helped her "a skinny 7-year-old standing outdoors in Tokyo" to overcome the biting cold by suggesting that they think otherwise.

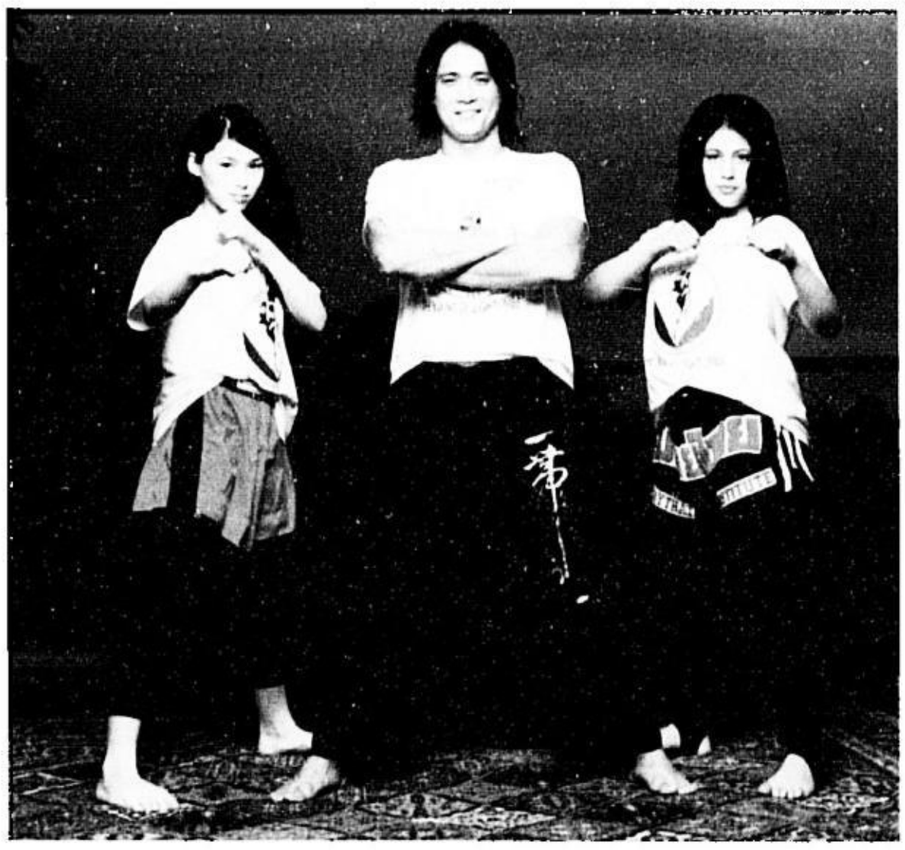
Despite Vivienne's skepticism, the older Tan persisted, asking her to imagine grass, the color green, the sun, birds and summer. Says Vivienne: "His words had the effect of a magic spell. I felt my body slowly cease its shivering, my teeth stop their jittering. When I opened my eyes, I was half-surprised to be in exactly the same place, still beside my father, who was now smiling. Then he said: "See? All you have to do is believe."

She continues: "The things of this world are fleeting. But my father has passed on to me the most precious and lasting inheritance of all: the power of believing."

Sometimes being a role model is all, says the children of charismatic leader Eddie Villanueva, erstwhile presidential candidate and founder of the Jesus is Lord ministry. He's always been true to his calling, his children recall. "(We were watching) an NBA game in Chicago and Dad was carefully examining everyone's faces with a distinct expression on his face. Before Joel could ask, he blurted out, 'Does any of you know how I could possibly get a moment to speak in this arena for just five minutes, just to share the Word of God?' We all laughed so hard upon hearing that but we actually felt prouder of him!"

Worth the accolade written by their children are the other subjects in this 144-page coffee table book, among them Gary Valenciano, Aga Muhlach, Martin Nievera, Robin Padilla, Satur Ocampo, Quezon City Mayor Sonny Belmonte, Joey Concepcion, Wilfred Uytengsu, David Guerrero, Rep. Manuel Villar, Wig Tysmans, Alejandro Prieto, Gawad Kalinga's Tony Meloto, Washington SyCip, Kenneth Coponpue, Ely Buendia, Atom Henares, Donny Tantoco, Patxi Elizalde, and Laurenti Dyogi. **PAC**

RC Constantino and children (above): Pride in the paterfamilias; Eddie V's flock of believers (left)



Padilla's staunch protectors are his daughters who are Muay Thai enthusiasts

Feature

By Tessa R. Salazar

More to Malls than Just Merchandise

Chances are, you are drawn to your favorite malls by their design features which, coincidentally, are becoming more Pinoy

FILIPINOS have been rated among the happiest people on earth. Malls, meanwhile, are considered places where people celebrate life. It naturally follows that Pinoys, like ants to sugar, are drawn to malls.

The sugar is sweetened even more, according to self-confessed mall rat Gideon Javier, with air-conditioning, lots of *"kainan"* and *"murang bilihin"* (food and good bargains). So, it really doesn't matter if you actually buy anything at the mall. For Javier, window shopping is as good an excuse to go malling as are the ample parking spaces and easy accessibility to public transportation.

Javier's addiction to malls surprises even his wife, who is constantly amazed at how the hubby would visit one store after another, like a hummingbird in a nectar-sipping frenzy.

Although Javier works with architects and engineers as a project management director of Colliers International, a property consulting firm, his team doesn't actually design malls. But if it did, you can count him in as an enthusiastic "hands-on" member.

"Slender, airy, light-filled symmetrical structures whose weight seems well distributed from top to bottom appeal not just to structural engineers but to people in general," Javier says of the best-designed malls he has been to.

He adds that once you get past the mad urge for details and ostentation, you would find that the prettiest structures are those whose parts serve a purpose, whether it be structural support, illumination or ventilation.

With these criteria in mind, he finds Rockwell and Greenbelt "nice." Bonifacio High Street, for him, is his kind of simple "pre-fab box structure."

In the mid-1990s, Javier lived in Tokyo, Japan where he and his buddy Marco would storm down shaded streets on their rollerblades for 10 km at a time and watch street performers "without getting too hot or sweaty. Now that was a mall!"

Javier recalls that when Streetlife started in Glorietta in Ayala Center in Makati in the late-1990s, he imagined such a "walkable street." "Thankfully, that has happened. From Streetlife we get to Greenbelt. From Greenbelt we get to Bonifacio High Street and Mall of Asia," he quips.

Javier hopes that the next step in the evolution of malls is toward this direction. "Hopefully,

Natural light: The atrium at the main lobby, SM Mall of Asia

developers would figure out how to make money from creating these walkable streets. I would be many times likely to buy something from here than in an air-conditioned corridor."

He adds that eliminating air-conditioned corridors would also mean reducing electric consumption and, more importantly, enticing people to walk rather than ride cars. The drive towards eco-friendly malls should include using waterless toilets and recycling wastewater, Javier notes.

For Hans Sy, SM Prime Holdings president, malls in the Philippines have evolved in such a way that they've become surrogate parks for urban dwellers who miss the relaxed spaciousness of country living.

"Malls in the Philippines have become a replacement for parks, and SM has tried to incorporate aspects of the park experience in the mall design," he says. Sy cites modern structural trends such as the SM Mall of Asia's "open skylight areas." He adds that two of SM's malls use natural lighting—SM City Baguio and the Mall of Asia.

Location, though, plays a crucial part in the decision to go natural. "In SM City Baguio, we want customers to experience the cool mountain air. SM Mall of Asia is beside the Bay Area, and there's nothing like the breeze from the bay. Of course, we also save on electrical costs in the process," Sy explains.

All SM malls have been using what they call the Energy Management System for the past eight years. The malls recycle water, which they use in cooling towers and to water the landscape areas. SM malls also use waterless urinals, which in the beginning were "quite costly," reveals Sy, "but in the end turned out to be more efficient and more environmentally correct."

Each SM mall also has a fully computerized building management system that monitors and regulates the air-conditioning to save on electricity.

Safety and security concerns have also been addressed, Sy adds. Aside from assuring pedestrian safety through the use of bollards, speed bumps, and double railings on escalators, SM malls employ inconspicuously placed closed circuit cameras.

The Mall of Asia—considered by Sy as its most challenging mall to date in terms of structure and design—is also the largest with 390,000 square meters (39 hectares) of floor area. That's about 30 percent larger than the SM Megamall, and can easily accommodate up to a million mallers.

That, however, will soon be surpassed by the SM City North Edsa, says Sy. As soon as renovation works are completed, SM City North will measure 450,000 sqm. In comparison, SM Supercenter Pasig is its smallest mall at just 29,000 sqm.

For SM Prime Holdings, mall designs have evolved out of years of studying Pinoy shopping habits, an advantage born of being in the business for almost 50 years.

"We do not want our customers to feel intimidated when they enter our malls," says Sy. "Our experience in retail has taught us that there are a lot of impulse buyers. We like to make our design in such a way that customers will want to stay longer in our malls."

For Roseann Coscolluela-Villegas, corporate PR manager for Robinsons Land Corp, what seem to work best with Pinoy shoppers are a clean and

(continued on page 15)

Browser

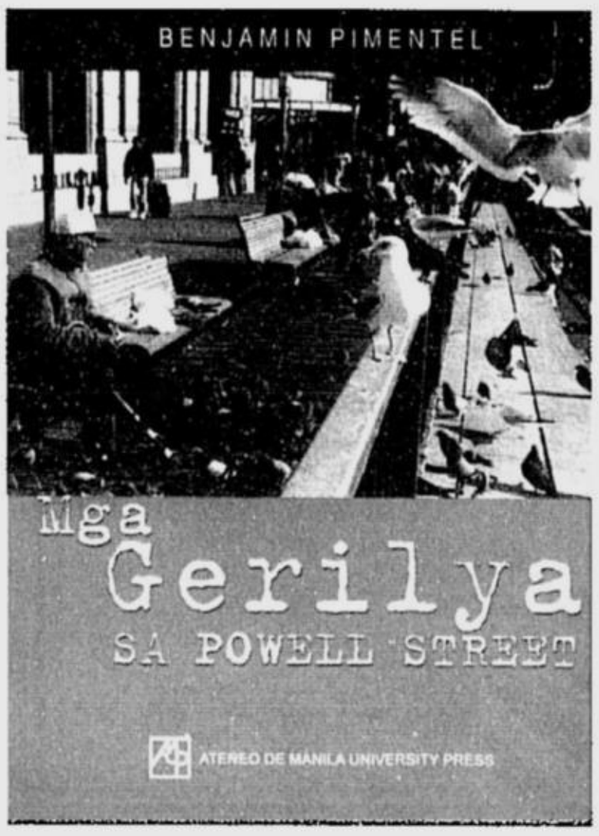
Still Waiting

WHEN writer Benjamin Pimentel moved to the United States in 1990 to go to UC Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism, he found himself just steps away from a great story.

"This was also around the time when (Filipino war) veterans began moving to the US after the law granting them citizenship was approved," he recounts. "When I began to work for the San Francisco Chronicle in 1993, many of these *beteranos* were already hanging out at Powell Street near the cable car stop by my office. So I often ran into them. I also wrote news features about them for the Chronicle."

A nonfiction book project on these destitute old men with documentary photographer Rick Rocamora fell through, but the veterans' voices stayed with Pimentel. "Later I wrote a short story titled `Waiting on Powell Street,' that won first prize in the Bienvenido Santos Story Contest in the US. That inspired me to expand the story into a novel."

The result is "*Mga Gerilya sa* Powell Street," a powerful narrative that follows the lives of several war veterans who find themselves fighting an even more daunting battle in the land of a former ally. Although classified as Filipino fiction, the book tells of the real-life struggle of Filipino vets as they spend most of their days idling at Powell street, waiting for the approval of a Veterans bill that would finally allow them to claim the benefits of US citizenship. Sharing rent in often unheated shoebox flats and subsisting on the meager comfort of stories from the ol' country, they are also bitterly aware of how time could be their worst adversary. In fact, most of them have expressed just one wish at this stage: the final dignity of coming back to the Philippines as a whole body, as in a coffin, instead of being burnt and ground into ashes, scooped into a mayonnaise bottle and hand-carried on a flight home, as had happened to an unfortunate colleague.



Veterans at Powell St: Hanging out and hoping

It almost makes for painful reading, so real and immediate are the veterans' voices, but one forges on, desperate for a happy ending, this being fiction after all.

Finally, a note of hope from real life: "There is another bill that is working its way through Congress," says Pimentel. "It looks like it could win enough support, but we'll see." **PAC**

"Mga Gerilya sa Powell Street," Ateneo de Manila University Press. Tel. 426-5984; faxs 426-5909. Also available at Popular Bookstore, Powerbooks Megamall and Solidaridad.

Italy, by way of Japan

SO what's a Japanese chef doing running an Italian restaurant? Excelling at it, that's what.

It all started in 1977, when Masaaki Honda opened the first Capricciosa branch in Shibuya, Tokyo. The years he spent studying in Italy together with his experience as a chef at the Italian Pavilion Café of the 1970 Osaka International Exposition gave him the groundwork for putting up this restaurant whose name translates to "spontaneity."

And why not? Honda wanted to highlight the natural fun of casual get-togethers over large servings of freshly cooked and authentic Italian cuisine. This is what Capricciosa strives for in its more than 150 branches in Japan, Guam, Saipan, Taiwan, Hawaii. A branch in Korea is currently in the works.

Capricciosa's Philippine outlet at Greenbelt 3, a franchise by Tan-Vy International, Incorporated, has the same international appeal. One can feast on Tomato with Garlic and Peppers, the Seafood Spaghetti, the Squid Ink Spaghetti made with real squid ink, and the Capricciosa Style Lasagna topped with generous layers of cheese. Among the other bestsellers are the scrumptious

Shrimp and Spinach Gratin

Rib-Eye Steak, made with US beef of excellent quality, and the tasty Grilled Rosemary Chicken. And of course, this being an Italian food place, there's Capricciosa's Traditional or Crispy Thin Crust, 10-inch pizzas.

Capricciosa marks its second year in the Philippines with new and exciting dishes, among them Capricciosa Saipan's famous appetizer, the Shrimp Cocktail, the Fresh Garden Salad and the Clam Chowder. Sprucing up the entrée menu is Capricciosa Japan's favorites like the flavorful Acciughe Anchovy Pizza and the Hamburg Neopolitan. Meat lovers will surely savor the Grilled Lamb Chop and Grilled Pork Chop, while kids will drool over Penne with Bacon in Tomato Cream Sauce. For sweet endings, try Capricciosa's homemade desserts, among them panna cotta, Tiramisu, Pumpkin Pie, and Apple a la mode.

Capricciosa is at the 3rd floor of Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center, Makati City. For inquiries and reservations, call 757 7811 or email capricciosa.makati@tanvygroup.com.

More to Malls than Just Merchandise (from page 14)

safe shopping environment, lots of parking space, and the tenant mix. She also observes that the dining-coffee shop trend is "hot," so adding that to the mix helps in drawing in people. For Villegas, what would complete the malling experience for Pinoys are popular boutiques, movies and events.

Unlike mammoth SM malls, Robinsons malls are more inclined to go mid-size. Villegas also reveals that Robinsons usually locates its establishments in areas with combined residential/business districts.

And since malls are already part of the Pinoy culture, Villegas explains that Robinsons has started to "liberate" their designs and operations. These subtle but noticeable changes include adding the al fresco dining experience and extending operations beyond regular mall hours. "That is why some tenants or outlets provide for their own entrance and exit points."

She describes Robinsons mall designs as "very modern, running along clean lines. Malls usually go either vertical or horizontal depending again on the environment and the configuration of the site."

There are 20 Robinsons malls in the Philippines. The biggest is Robinsons Galleria and the smallest is Robinsons Townmall in Los Baños. •

WORLD / A28

6 world powers call for new sanctions vs Iran

ACROSS / A20

Manobo evacuees urge stop to AFP operations

WORLD / A27

Chinese beauty stands tall as Miss World

NEWS / A2

RP faces water crisis, says ADB report

METRO / A25

Dogfight arena in Rizal raided

After tumult at home, GMA prays at Lourdes

By Michael Lim Ubac

MADRID (VIA PLDT)—PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo yesterday prayed at the shrine of the miraculous Lady of Lourdes in southwestern France after surviving another military uprising last week.

Ms Arroyo was accompanied by her husband Jose Miguel, children and grandchild-

AFTER/ A18

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Monday, December 3, 2007 ★★ 11 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 358 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

Barias' wish: Boxing bout with Trillanes

By Nikko Dizon

IF POLICE DIRECTOR Geary Barias was wishing for anything while watching yesterday's fights at the Araneta Coliseum featuring two Filipino boxers, it was

BARIAS'/ A19

ABS-CBN role probed

TV exec to mutiny probers: Show us what you have

By Christine O. Avendaño, Nikko Dizon and Leila B. Salaverria

THE GOVERNMENT YESterday widened its probe of the failed mutiny at the Peninsula Manila hotel, even as a senior official raised questions on what role, if any, media giant ABS-CBN network played in the crisis.

But a top ABS-CBN executive challenged investigators to produce evidence.

Asked if there were other politicians and businessmen who might have been involved in the hotel siege, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said: "We are checking information that there are people of prominence who might have been. I don't want to talk about it."

Asked if charges would be pressed against these personalities, he said a "case buildup" was still being done.

"It will depend on the evidence. You just can't jump into filing cases without sufficient evidence," Gonzalez said.

A senior government official on top of the investigation said that while probers were not investigating ABS-CBN, the decision of the network's news crew to stay on at the hotel despite police orders for the media to pull out had raised questions.

"Every one of the ABS-CBN team was left behind and every one else left. Why did they not comply with the government's request?" said the official, who asked not to be identified because the investigation was still going on.

"If only some members of the ABS-CBN team stayed behind, they're enterprising reporters. *Kung lahat hindi umalis, baka yun desk ang nag-utos* (If all

ABS-CBN/ A12

FILIPINO boxing champion Nonito Donaire (left) clobbers Mexico's Luis Maldonado in their title fight in Connecticut. AP

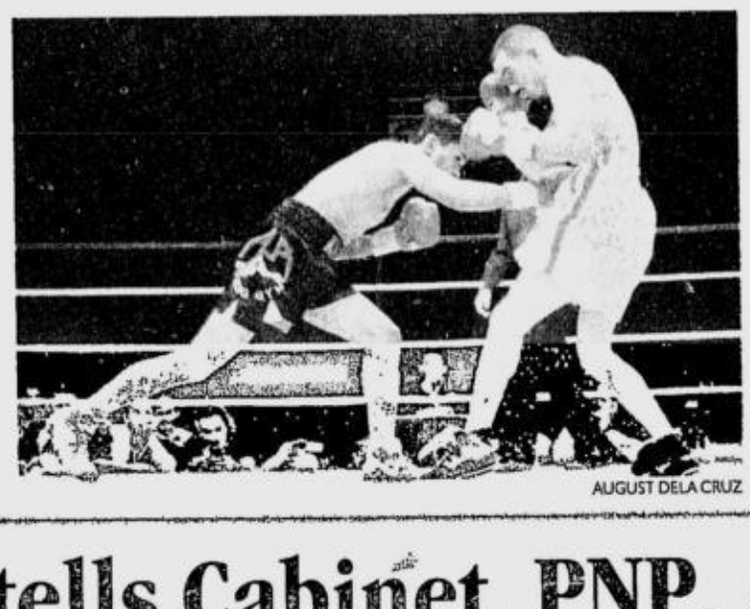
Nonito, 'Boom Boom' punish foes

MASHANTUCKET, CONNECTICUT—Filipino boxing star Nonito Donaire stopped Mexico's Luis Maldonado in the eighth round here on Saturday to keep the International Boxing Federation flyweight crown.

The "Filipino Flash" pounded the challenger throughout the bout, ending matters 76 seconds into the eighth round with a powerful left hand in his first title defense.

"I guess my validation was today, but I didn't feel at my best," Donaire said. "I felt sluggish. I didn't have my legs. I don't know what the problem

NONITO/ A8



AUGUST DELA CRUZ

ANOTHER Filipino champion, Rey "Boom Boom" Bautista (left), demolishes another Mexican, Antonio "Barrio" Meza, at the Araneta Coliseum in Quezon City.

President hostage to guns of gov't troops

By Amando Doronila

OF THE NEARLY DOZEN COUP ATtempts in the Philippines during the past 21 years, none may be considered a purely military undertaking. None also succeeded in replacing civilian rule with a military dictatorship.

The latest coup attempt staged on Nov. 29 at the Peninsula Manila hotel by Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV, a former Navy lieutenant, and Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim, a former Army Scout Ranger commander, was swiftly crushed. It turned out to be a farce, a comic opera.

ANALYSIS

But it also unmasked an alarming political reality—the hijacking of Philippine democracy and sidelining of constitutional authorities when the police and military responded to the crisis provoked by a rebellious segment of the Armed Forces.

The police-military assault on the Peninsula became an exclusively all-military conflict. In swiftly crushing the power grab attempt, troops loyal to the government made mass arrests not only of noncombatants from civil society but also journalists covering

PRESIDENT/ A17

JDV: Revolt no cause for alarm

By Christian V. Esguerra and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

WHERE WAS SPEAKER JOSE DE Venecia when President Macapagal-Arroyo was facing yet another threat from rebel soldiers?

While Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV and Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim were awaiting a small anti-Arroyo crowd to swell around the Peninsula Manila hotel that they had seized on Thursday, De Venecia was just as busy in another hotel in another part of town.

De Venecia, credited with helping save the President from ouster during the "Hello Garci" controversy in

JDV/ A19

Don't rile media, GMA tells Cabinet, PNP, AFP

By Christine O. Avendaño, Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Christian V. Esguerra

IN ONE OF HER LAST-MINUTE INstructions before she boarded a flight to Europe on Saturday night, President Macapagal-Arroyo told her Cabinet and top military and police officials to ensure that they did "not unnecessarily rile the media at this point in time."

With no letup in the media condemnation of the manner the police mistreated journalists who covered the standoff at the Peninsula Manila hotel on Thursday, Ms Arroyo said the officials should remain factual, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said yesterday.

Ms Arroyo had met with Gonzalez, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro, Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon and Philippine National Police Director General Avelino Razon at the airport shortly before leaving for a weeklong trip to France, Spain and Britain.

"In effect, she told us that when we react, be factual ... just explain what really happened ... don't be emotional about it," Gonzalez quoted Ms Arroyo as saying.

The President was concerned about the way the police had been battered in the press, he added.

Several dozen media people were manacled and whisked off to the Bicutan police headquarters for interroga-

DON'T RILE/ A18

Storyteller Karylle also plays 'Cat'

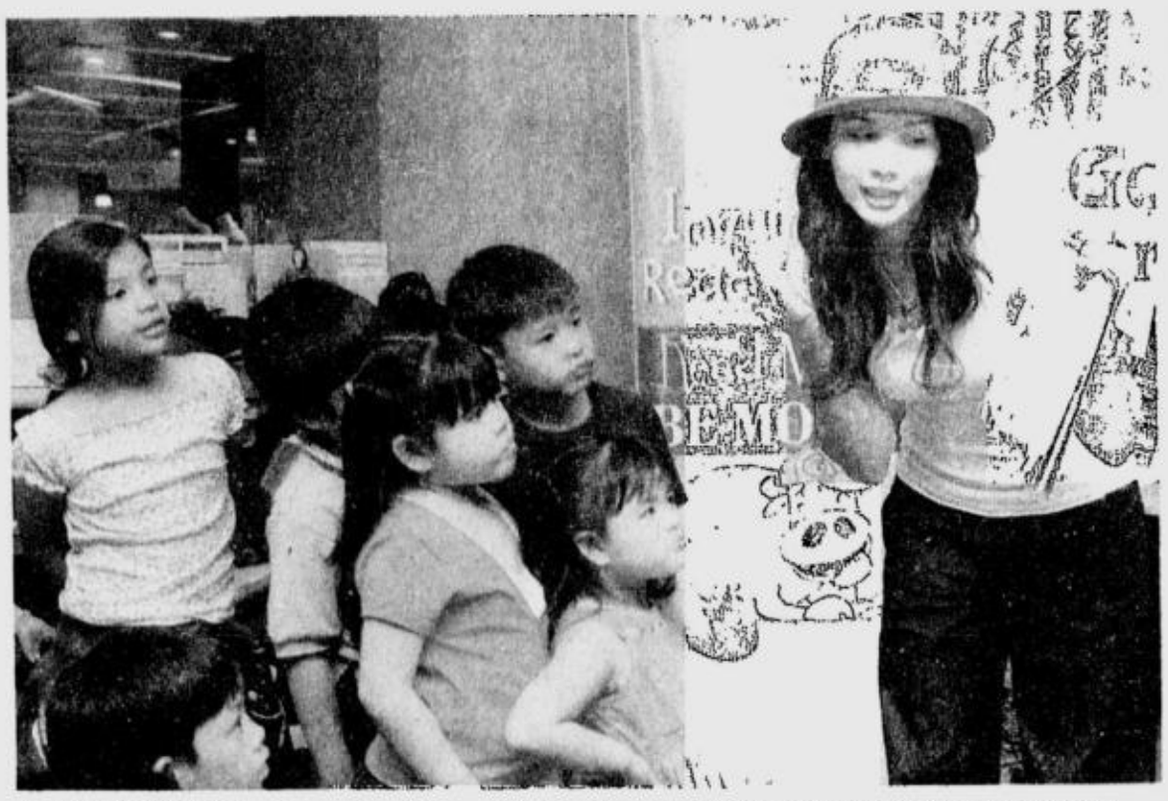
By Eliza Victoria
Inquirer Research

SOME 70 CHILDREN PLAYED underwater, outsmarted a mischievous cat, and cheered for a brave pug who lost a pet contest during the 19th INQUIRER Read-Along session on Saturday at the National Book Store on Quezon Avenue in Quezon City.

Walking the children through these adventures were celebrity reader Karylle, returning Alitaptap storyteller Charlyn Chua and child author Isabella Clarisse Juria.

It was the third session held

STORYTELLER/ A6



ACTRESS-SINGER Karylle regales children with the adventures of "The Cat in the Hat" in a storytelling session of the INQUIRER's Read-Along program at the National Bookstore on Quezon Avenue. ROMY HOMILLADA

RP nun offers evidence of Brazilian's sainthood

By Eliza Victoria
Inquirer Research

A MARTYRED BRAZILian nun was beatified yesterday in the first step toward sainthood, and a Filipino nun may be the one to provide evidence of the miracle needed for canonization.

SR. LINDALVA Justa de Oliveira: Beatified.

Sr. Lindalva Justa de Oliveira, who belonged to the international congregation of the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul and died a martyr in Recife, Brazil, in 1993, was beatified on Dec. 2, the first Sunday of Advent, at the Barradao Stadium in Sao Salvador da Bahia, Brazil.

In the Philippines, the beatification of Sister Lindalva was marked by a Eucharistic celebration at the Chapel of St. Louise de Marillac at the Daughters of Charity provincial house in Parañaque City led by the provincial, Sr. Ma. Teresa Mueda.

The experience of a member of the congregation's Philippine province, Sr. Estrella Señarosa, who claims to have experienced a miraculous cure through the intercession of the Brazilian nun, may provide some of the evidence required for her canonization, according

RP NUN/ A6

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MONDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2007

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Second FRONTPAGE

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern and Southern Luzon and the whole of Visayas will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers.

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Partly Cloudy

COMPILED BY: RHEA BLANCAS, PDI RESEARCH/12/03/07 SOURCE: PAGASA

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RP faces water crisis – ADB

Unless things are turned around, river, groundwater systems will fail by 2025

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINES' WATER RESOURCES ARE FAST deteriorating with rapid urbanization, with only about 33 percent of river systems still suitable as a supply source and up to 58 percent of groundwater now contaminated, a new Asian Development Bank study said.

In its publication, "Asian Water Development Outlook 2007" launched last week, the ADB warned that water availability in the Philippines could be "unsatisfactory" in eight of its 19 major river basins and in most major cities before 2025.

The ability of groundwater—or water held underground or in pores and crevices in rocks—to meet future water demand was also projected to be very limited, amounting to only 20 percent of the total water requirement in the country's nine main urban centers by 2025.

Depletion of groundwater resources is already an increasing problem in Metro Manila and Metro Cebu at present, the study said.

Untreated discharges

"Water quality is poorest in urban areas, the main sources of pollution being untreated discharges of industrial and municipal wastewater," the ADB said.

Although groundwater resources are generally abundant and of adequate quality for domestic purposes, the study said poor environmental management of extractive resource industries—such as uncontrolled forestry, mining and minerals extraction—was leading to the pollution of downstream water courses and aquifers.

"The majority of solid waste disposal and landfill sites are poorly operated and maintained, permitting leachate to pollute some water resources," it said.

In Manila, for instance, the study noted that less than four percent of the population was connected to the sewer network, with many high-income households constructing their own facilities.

Pasig one of most polluted

"Flush toilets connected to septic tanks are widely used, and often serve large housing developments. However, sludge treatment and disposal facilities are rare, resulting in indiscriminate disposal of untreated or poorly treated effluent into the Pasig River, one of the world's most polluted rivers," the study pointed out.

Over-exploitation is also lowering water tables, leading to increasing intrusion of saline (salty solution), it noted.

"The rapid urbanization of the Philippines, with more than 2 million persons being added to the urban population annually, is having a major impact on water resources," the study stressed.

Danger signals

The study also pointed out the following:

- 16 rivers are now considered biologically dead during dry months;
- 48 percent of water pollutants arise from domestic waste, 37 percent from agricultural waste, and 15 percent from industrial waste;
- Solid waste generation in Metro Manila, now estimated at 5,345 tons per day, is expected to double by 2010. But only 65–75 percent of the waste generated is collected, with only 13 percent of that recycled, and the remainder just thrown anywhere, particularly into creeks, threatening health and increasing flooding;
- Some 700 industrial establishments in the Philippines generate about 273,000 tons of hazardous waste annually, but at present there is no integrated treatment facility in the country to deal with it, although there are some 95 small to medium-scale hazardous waste treatment facilities;
- Approximately 50,000 tons of hazardous waste are stored on- or off-site due to lack of proper treatment and landfill facilities.

Investments needed

The priority sector constraints that the country must address include sector "underfunding" and slow promulgation of environmental legislation, such as the Water Resources Management Act and the creation of a National Environmental Management Authority, the study said.

The study also lamented the insufficient enforcement of existing legislation, and the weak legal and regulatory framework for environmental impact assessments, monitoring and coordination. Data for planning and management were incomplete, it said.

Investments over the last two decades have been insufficient. At least P40 billion or at least one percent of GDP (gross domestic product) will be needed to meet development goals," the study said.

WHAT'S INSIDE

RP NEEDS 'servant leaders,' says Chief Justice /A4

SENATE restores debt payments to 2008 budget /A10

PAF WON'T end search for missing jet /A7

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Freedom sought for sick, oldest female detainee

By Jerome Aning

AS THE WORLD MARKS INTERNATIONAL Day of Solidarity with Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War today, the militant women's group Gabriela yesterday asked the government to free an ailing 63-year-old lay missionary and teacher who has been languishing in jail for two years on rebellion and murder charges.

Gabriela said Angelina Bisuña Ipong, was the country's oldest female political detainee.

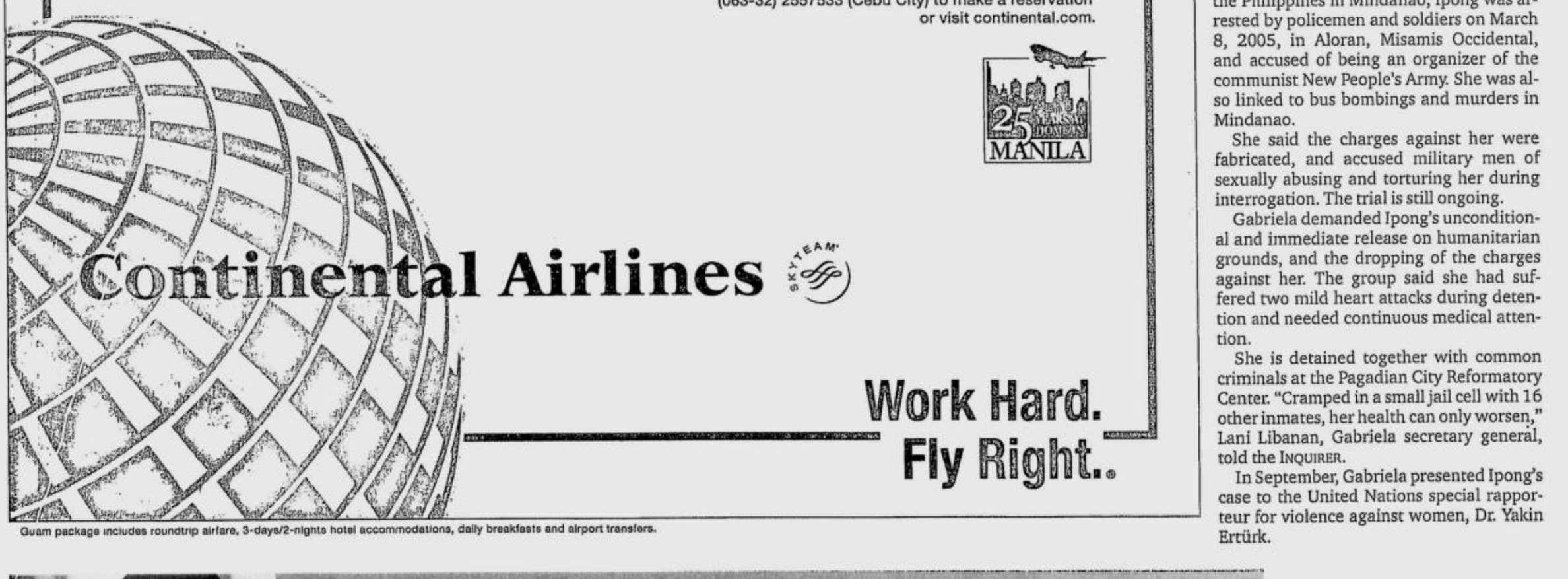
A graduate of Ateneo de Naga University and a member of the Rural Missionaries of the Philippines in Mindanao, Ipong was arrested by policemen and soldiers on March 8, 2005, in Aloran, Misamis Occidental, and accused of being an organizer of the communist New People's Army. She was also linked to bus bombings and murders in Mindanao.

She said the charges against her were fabricated, and accused military men of sexually abusing and torturing her during interrogation. The trial is still ongoing.

Gabriela demanded Ipong's unconditional and immediate release on humanitarian grounds, and the dropping of the charges against her. The group said she had suffered two mild heart attacks during detention and needed continuous medical attention.

She is detained together with common criminals at the Pagadian City Reformatory Center. "Cramped in a small jail cell with 16 other inmates, her health can only worsen," Lani Libanan, Gabriela secretary general, told the INQUIRER.

In September, Gabriela presented Ipong's case to the United Nations special rapporteur for violence against women, Dr. Yakin Ertürk.



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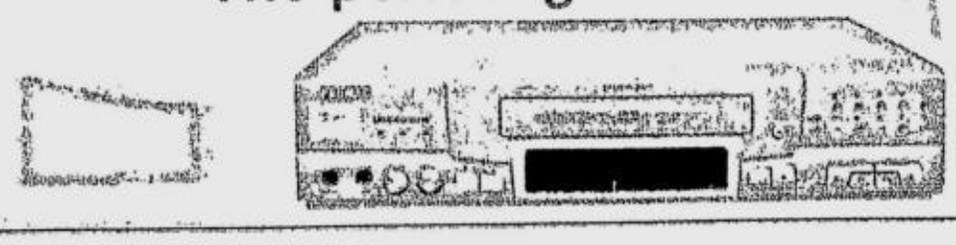

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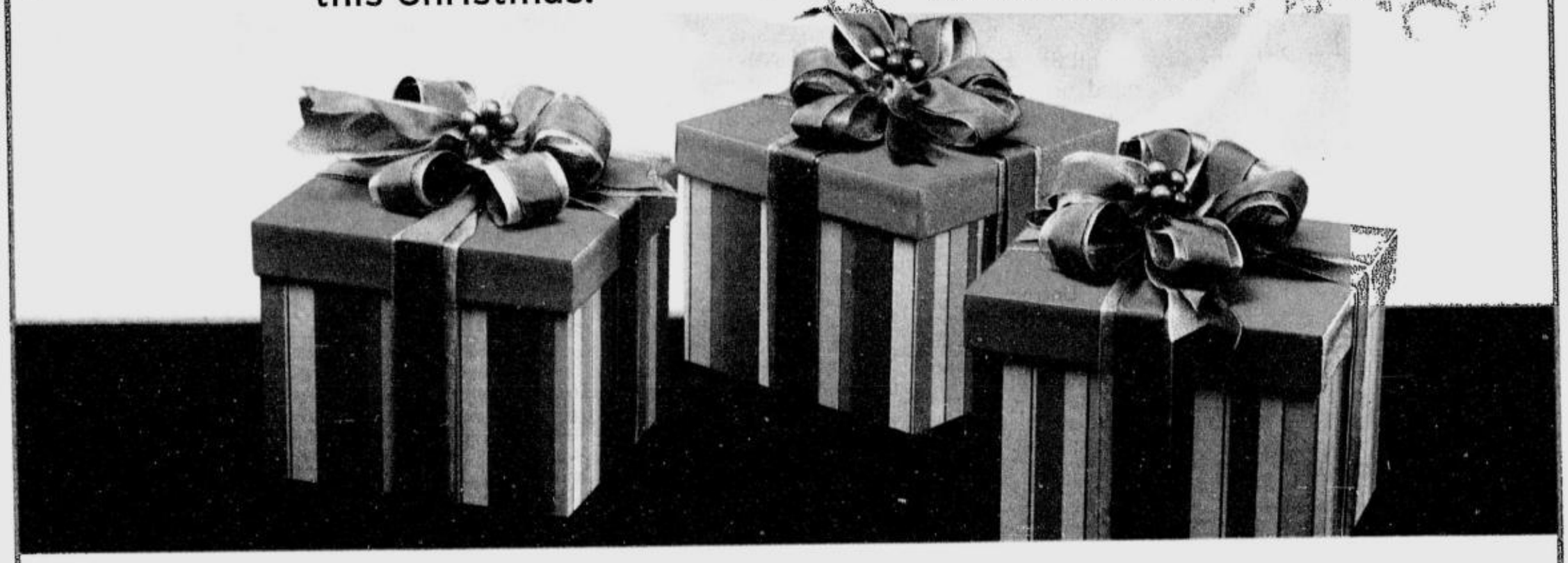

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marie france

We're back, says Manila Pen

THE PENINSULA MANILA ANNOUNCED it was reopening for business today, four days after hotel operations were disrupted by its takeover by a group of rebel soldiers led by Navy lieutenant turned senator Antonio Trillanes IV.

"While last Thursday's events were certainly a confusing and distressing experience for everyone, we are extremely pleased that everything is back to normal and we are able to open the hotel again so quickly," said Peninsula general manager David Batchelor in a statement.

"We look forward to welcoming back our guests, patrons and friends to the hotel to celebrate the holiday season with us," he added.

The statement said the Peninsula was closed temporarily to assist in the investigation of the events of Nov. 29 by the authorities and to allow repair work to be done in its lobby and function rooms which were heavily damaged when government forces attacked to force the Trillanes group out of the hotel.

The "Christmas Concert at The Pen" will take place as scheduled on Dec. 8, the statement said.

"The lavish decorations, majestic Christmas tree and festive carols promise a Christmas to remember," it said.

The hotel was to have been the venue that Thursday of the wedding reception of Ma. Estela Magpayo and Guderian Montaño, son of retired general Ramon Montaño, but the affair had to be transferred to another venue because of the incident.

"The hotel intends to invite Mr. and Mrs. Montaño to return for a weekend stay in a premier suite—compliments of The Peninsula—as a gesture of goodwill," the statement added.

RP needs 'servant leaders' for moral revolution–Puno

By Chito A. Fuentes
Inquirer Visayas

TAGBILARAN CITY—CHIEF JUSTICE Reynato Puno issued a call on Saturday for "servant leaders" who would spearhead a moral revolution "and not just stay in the safety of the sidelines."

Puno, guest of honor at the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International (FGBMFI), Bohol chapter, dinner fellowship and induction of new members at the Metro Center Hotel here, took his cue from the political turmoil in Manila, highlighting the call for a moral revolution on the part of the country's leaders.

He described servant leaders as those "who will save souls and not their skin, leaders who will bring people to His kingdom and free them from the dominion of false gods, leaders who are not only right but also righteous." This is the kind of leadership that will "bring about the correct transformation of society," he said.

Recalling his interaction with the local media that morning, Puno said "I was asked point-blank about my response to the call for a moral revolution on the part of our leaders, political and ecclesiastical alike. I said I am all for a moral revolution for change, but the kind of change shown by our Lord Jesus Christ some 2,000 years ago."

"Jesus is calling all to be servant leaders," the Chief Justice said.

Quoting extensively from the Scriptures, he said: "Righteousness will exalt a nation, for only righteousness can save a people."

Puno said God was calling people to be His leaders "for the sake of yourself, your family, our country."

"We are all leaders, either for good or for ill," he told his audience which included Tagbilaran Mayor Dan Lim, Rep. Adam Relson Jala, judges and lawyers.

He said that as leaders, "the things we do, the things we say are never neutral."

Puno described life as "a continuing fight for good or ill, a fight in which you have to take a side, a fight in which you cannot stay in the safety of the sidelines; a fight in which you can't be neutral and later join the bandwagon of winners, a fight which you have to fight under the banner of God, a fight which God will never lose."

Puno concluded his speech by illustrating the difference between "leadership in the material world and that in the spiritual world."

"Leaders in the material world become leaders by the process of ascending the ladder of power, by allying themselves with powerful vested interests of society; by kowtowing to the majority even if it is wrong; by following the fashion of the time, by continuously pushing themselves up and pushing down those against them," he said.

On the other hand, he said, leaders of the spiritual world were different. "They lead by descending from the ladder of power; they descend to ally themselves not with the powerful but with the powerless; they do not follow the fad and the fashion of the time but what is right and righteous for all time; they do not push themselves up but down so that others may be elevated," he said.

Protesters want Smith in RP jail

SOME TWO DOZEN PROTESTERS stormed the American Embassy on Roxas Boulevard, Manila, on Sunday, pounding a US government seal at the gate before policemen pushed them away.

The protesters demanded the transfer to a Philippine prison of US Marine Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith, who was convicted exactly a year ago of raping a Filipino woman but has remained under US custody at the heavily fortified embassy.

Taking advantage of the absence of policemen, the protesters ran toward the gates and used their fists and a red brick to pound a bronze US government seal on the wall, an Associated Press photographer at the scene said.

Policemen arrived later and pushed them away but did not make any arrests.

"It has been one year and he is still being protected by the United States government," said protest leader Vencer Crisostomo, adding that American soldiers should face the consequences of the crimes they commit overseas.

A Makati court convicted Smith last year of raping a Filipino woman in a van at Subic Bay as fellow Marines cheered him on. The court sentenced him to 40 years in prison.

The Philippine government agreed to allow Smith to be detained at the US Embassy during his appeal, angering Filipino women's groups and left-wing activists. *AP*

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, December 3, 2007
1st Week of Advent
Francis Xavier

1st Reading: Is 4:2-6
Gospel: Matthew 8:5-11

When Jesus entered Capernaum, an army captain approached him to ask his help, "Sir, my servant lies sick at home. He is paralyzed and suffers terribly." Jesus said to him, "I will come and heal him."

The captain answered, "I am not worthy to have you under my roof. Just give an order and my boy will be healed. For I myself, a junior officer, give orders to my soldiers. And if I say to one: 'Go,' he goes, and if I say to another: 'Come,' he comes, and to my servant: 'Do this,' he does it."

When Jesus heard this he was astonished and said to those who were following him, "I tell you, I have not found such faith in Israel. I say to you, many will come from east and west and sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob at the feast in the kingdom of heaven."

Commentary

Now is the time for visions. These are the priorities of God—are they ours too? Are we the holy ones of God? Have we been purged and cleansed? Do we live with the knowledge that God is our shelter, our protection, and is always present with us as a refuge and cover from turmoil? Do we treat the earth so that its luster and splendor reveals God for everyone?

What is our attitude towards Jesus the Christ—is it like that of the centurion, an outsider who comes with such respect and honor for Jesus' power that he knows just Jesus' Word is enough to heal and give life, releasing from paralysis even from a distance? Does God find faith like this in us who cherish his Word and seek its power to convert and heal our own broken lives in Church and in the world?

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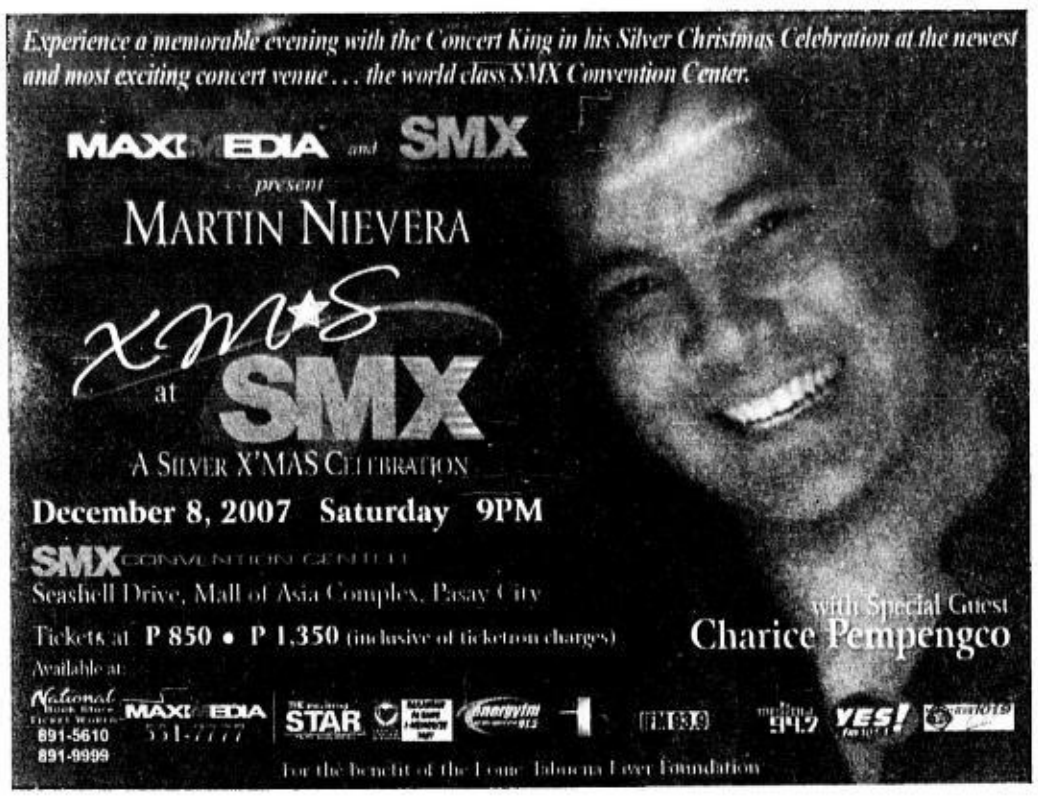

Storyteller Karylle also plays 'Cat'

From page A1

outside the INQUIRER offices.

Karylle read Dr. Seuss' classic, "The Cat in the Hat," and even donned a red top hat for the part. She also read "You're a Star," together with its 8-year-old author Juria, who had written about a little girl who entered her pug in a pet contest.

Body painting

Chua read Dina Ocampo's "Maningning" and Eugene Evasco's "Amansinaya: Ang Diwata ng Dagat." Both stories take place underwater.

The fun started with a free face and body painting for the children. Sitting on a mat, they had their cheeks and arms painted with butterflies, scorpions, dragons and flowers.

A little girl's face was painted to look like a tiger—complete with orange and yellow streaks on the cheeks and a black nose.

Singer-actress Karylle (born Ana Karylle Padilla Tatlonghari), who graduated with a degree in Communication Technology Management from the Ateneo de Manila University in 2002, chose to read Dr. Seuss' best-selling story because she's playing the role of the Cat in the Hat in the coming stage production, "Seussical, the Musical."

Better than TV

"I've been living in the Cat's shoes for several rehearsals now," she said.

Karylle had her first big break in 2000 when she played Princess Sapphire in the stage musical "The Little Mermaid."

"This is a great project," she said. "We should bring back this method of telling stories. TV—we have that every day. Pure reading should be interesting enough."

Then it was child author Juria's turn to shine. She and Karylle sat side by side and took turns reading Juria's literary creation, "You're A Star."

She loves Shakespeare

Juria, who started reading at age 2, is enrolled at De La Salle Santiago Zobel School in Muntinlupa City, where she has been her batch's topnotcher for three years now. Her mother Cyrill said her daughter loves reading abridged versions of Shakespearean plays and the classics.

Juria wrote "You're A Star" in longhand sometime in September. Her mother retyped it and sent the manuscript to Vibal Publishing. An offer to publish came after a week and the book was launched on Nov. 9 in Makati City.

"I was very excited," Juria said. "I got the idea from reading books. I want to write stories that can make other children happy."

She dreams of writing another story with her 3-year-old sister Sophia doing the illustrations.

Wanted: Local authors

Chua, Alitaptap vice president, said her organization encourages local authors to enliven Philippine children's literature.

Alitaptap is a group of volunteer storytellers who aim to spread the importance of reading.

"Most kids know foreign authors," Chua said, who teaches at the Willow Tree Learning Center in Quezon City. "It would be nice to introduce them to our local writers and their stories."

Chua said her personal favorite was Palanca Award winner Luis Gatmaitan's "May Mga Lihim Kami ni Ingkong," a story that tackles Alzheimer's Disease.

"I cry whenever I read it," she said.

Chua also said Alitaptap practiced "book-based interactive technique," in which the storyteller kept her movements to a minimum to keep the children's attention on the book and not on the storyteller.

Anniversary read-along

Saturday's session, hosted by INQUIRER corporate affairs associate Megi Garcia, was sponsored by the National Book Store Foundation, Vibal Publishing House, Alitaptap Storytellers, and 3S Party Exchange.

Past celebrity readers included Dingdong Dantes, Manilyn Reynes, Sam Concepcion, Cheska Ortega, University of the Philippines summa cum laude graduate Mikaela Irene Fudolig, Olsen Racela, Miss Earth-Philippines 2007 Jean Harn, Little Earth Angel winner Denisse Mikaela Abuan, Bernard Joecel "Tolits" Forbes, Christine Bersola-Babao, Maricel Laxa-Pangilinan and Donita Rose.

As part of the INQUIRER's anniversary celebration, a special Read-Along session will be held on Dec. 8 at its office on Chino Roces Avenue in Makati.

INQUIRER president Alexandra Prieto-Romualdez is the guest reader.

The session will also feature teachers from the Sophia School and storytellers from Alitaptap.

Interested parties may call Ellen Caparros or Girlie Refran at 897-8808, local 329. Those interested in donating books to the program may e-mail inquirer-readalong@inquirer.com.ph.

RP nun offers evidence ...

From page A1

to Sisters Margarita Duran and Nenita Pateña.

The two nuns related how Sister Estrella, who is now in her 80s, had lost all muscle control in her eyelids so that she could no longer open her eyes.

Sister Estrella prayed to Sister Lindalva. She would say, "Sister Lindalva, please intercede with the Blessed Mother. Help me open my eyes and see again."

DURAN

PATEÑA

Sister Estrella, who has been with the congregation for 50 years, recovered. She attributes her renewed health to Sister Lindalva.

"Of course, this has to be proven. We would need a medical expert to prove her [Sister Estrella's] case," said Sister Nenita.

Answered prayers

"We have other sisters who say they've been praying to her [Sister Lindalva], and that their prayers are being answered," the two nuns said.

They said evidence of a further miracle attributed to the intercession of the person after beatification was required, although the Pope could waive this.

But Sisters Margarita and Nenita said they were optimistic that Sister Lindalva would be declared a saint. "We can see this happening. Just look at the fact that her beatification was done so quickly," they said.

First stage

In the Roman Catholic Church, beatification is the first step in the conferment of the status of saint on a dead person. Beatification is the official act of the Pope permitting the veneration of a person with the title of "Blessed" within a particular diocese, order or other limited area. The Church then puts the case for canonization which is completed after satisfactory evidence of the person's exceptional virtue and miracles that are regarded as authentic.

"She lived a very holy life," Sister Nenita said of the Brazilian nun who was born the sixth in a family of 14 children on Oct. 20, 1953 in Acu, a city in the Rio Grande do Norte state of Brazil.

Having stayed home to help her mother care for her sick father, Sister Lindalva did not enter the congregation until she was 35 years old in July 1989, following her father's death. A member of the congregation's Recife Province, she was sent on a mission in 1991 to the Abrigo Dom Pedro II in Bahia, a home devoted to the care of men who are elderly and sick.

Servant of the poor

Founded in France in the 17th century by St. Vincent de Paul and St. Louise de Marillac, the Daughters of Charity are called to serve Jesus Christ in the person of the poor. Members of the congregation, now composed of 78 provinces in 91 countries, live in small communities, supporting one another in their common mission of service.

The congregation's Philippine province, which manages the Hospicio de San Jose orphanage, has 457 members, with Filipino missionaries in Greece, Libya, Australia and Lebanon.

Sister Lindalva lived her vocation as a servant of poor people in a spirit of justice inspired by love. She loved the elderly people in her care with a gentle and humble heart.

"We must serve our poorest brothers and sisters with love and a total gift of the self. It is in them that God dwells and where He awaits us," she said.

A martyr

On Good Friday, April 9, 1993, Sister Lindalva returned to the residence after attending a dawn service with parishioners. As she began her work in the infirmary, she was attacked by a 46-year-old disturbed man who had recently come to live among the elderly residents of the home. She was stabbed 39 times and died just two years after she was admitted to the congregation.

According to the account of Sr. Evelyne Franc, the congregation's superioress general, the process of Sister Lindalva's beatification was started by popular acclaim.

"People were touched by this young sister's faith, service of the poor and fidelity to her commitment that ultimately led to her martyrdom. This was recognized by the Church," Sister Evelyne said.

"She is a martyr, given that she simply gave her life, if not on account of hatred for the faith, at least surely as a proof of her great love for God and for her brothers and sisters," Bishop Cardinal Lucas Morera Neves, the Primate of Salvador da Bahia, said at the funeral Mass for Sister Lindalva.

One of the fastest

The cause of her beatification was advanced at the gathering of the Congress of Theologians on Sept. 26, 2006 and approved the same year by Pope Benedict XVI when he announced the promulgation of the decree declaring Sister Lindalva's martyrdom.

The approval came just 14 years after Sister Lindalva's death, which Sister Evelyne noted was one of the fastest beatification processes in the history of the Church. Only those of St. Clare, St. Francis and Mother Teresa had moved as quickly.

Sister Nenita said Sister Lindalva's life could be an inspiration to the country's youth.

"It is possible that during this age and time to do something blessed, it is possible to really dedicate your life in the service of those who are poor," she said.

PAF: Search for jet off Kalayaan won't stop

SAYING NO PLANE or pilot was left unfound, the Philippine Air Force yesterday dispatched another search plane over the waters of the Kalayaan island group where a jet and its pilots disappeared last week.

"We will not stop the search. That's how we do it. Whenever a plane or pilots get lost, we never stop until we find them," said PAF spokesperson Lt. Col. Epifanio Panzo Jr.

A PAF Fokker arrived at Antonio Bautista Air Base in Puerto Princesa City yesterday to augment the planes and ships looking for the S-211 trainer jet that disappeared on Nov. 26 while flying in tandem with a similar plane and searching for a missing fishing boat, said Maj. Federico Ferrero Jr., base information chief.

In the two-seater were Capt. Gavino Mercado Jr. and Capt. Bonifacio Soriano III.

A United States maritime patrol plane also searched the Kalayaan waters but found no trace of the aircraft.

The S-211 is one of five in the PAF fleet.
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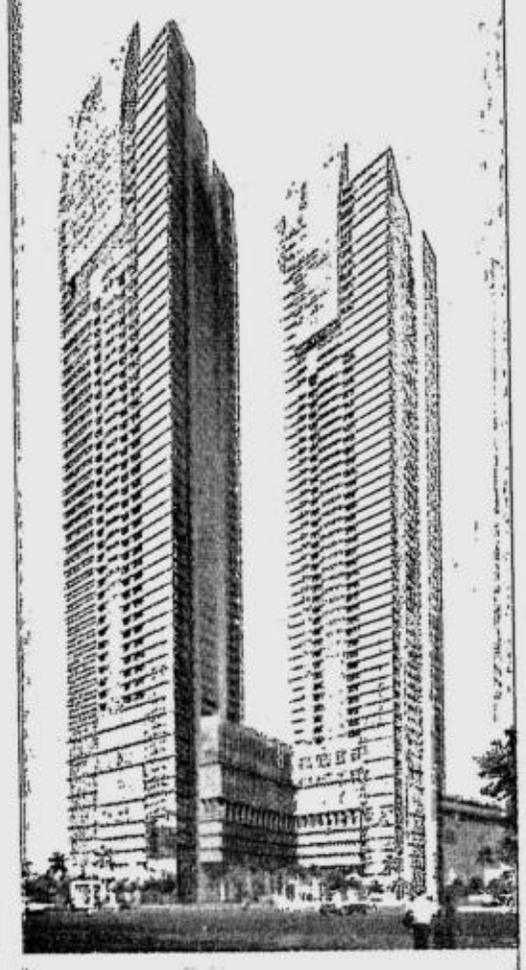
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Nonito, 'Boom Boom' punish foes

From page A1

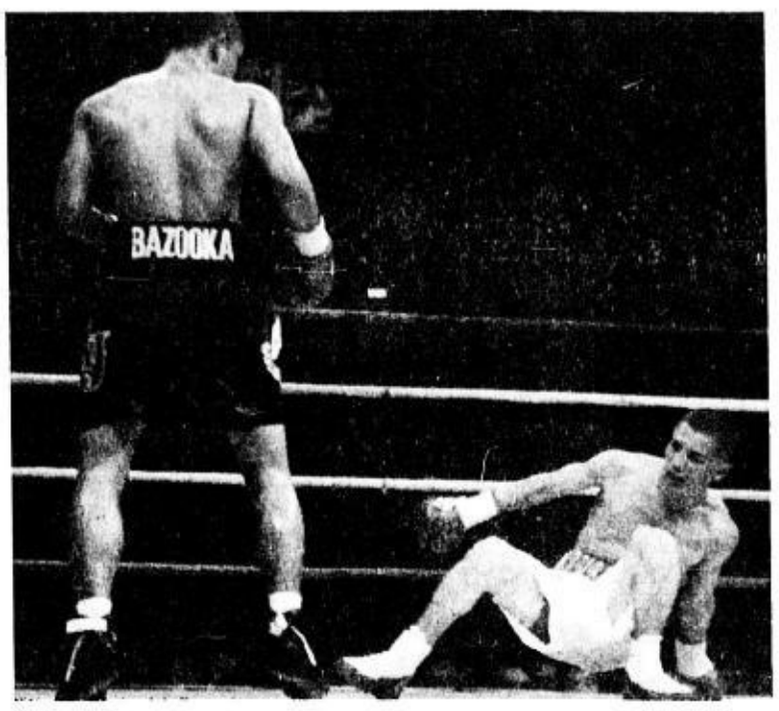
was. I couldn't move well so I tried to rely on my upper body movement."

Donaire, who claimed the crown from Armenian Vic Darchinyan in July, improved to 19-1 with his 12th early stoppage for his 18th triumph in a row despite hurting his left hand early in the fight.

"I've always had that problem but it's OK. I still got the victory," he said. "I'm happy for my country. We have four world champions now."

Apart from Donaire, the country's world champions include WBO bantamweight champion Gerry Peñalosa, WBO minimumweight titlist Donnie Nietes, and IBF minimumweight champion Florante Condes.

Filipino ring icon Manny Pacquiao holds the international version of the WBC super featherweight title, while Rey "Boom Boom" Bautista also holds an international version of the WBO's super bantamweight class. International titles are normally reserved for boxers outside the top 10 of their respective weight classes.



THE PHILIPPINES' AJ "Bazooka" Banal floors Jovanny "Bambino" Soto of Mexico. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Bautista retained that belt by beating Antonio "Barrio" Meza Saturday at the Araneta Coliseum in Manila via a unanimous decision. In that same fight card, AJ "Bazooka" Banal scored a ninth-round technical knockout against Mexican Jovanny "Bambino" Soto to also retain his WBO Youth super flyweight belt.

Maldonado fell to 37-2 with one draw after being knocked down for only the second time in his pro career.

A lot defensive

"He wasn't awkward but he was a lot defensive. I couldn't get through," said Donaire. "I knew he was a tough fighter. I respect him. I hit him with a good uppercut right on the button and he came back. He gave me a hell of a fight."

Donaire opened a cut over Maldonado's left eye in the second round and another over the right eye in the fourth, hammering the gutty and bloodied challenger throughout the first half of the fight.

In the seventh round, Donaire landed a stunning uppercut followed by a powerful left hook that dropped Maldonado to his knees, his only taste of the canvas other than when Darchinyan sent him down 18 months ago.

The Mexican then fell onto the canvas but rose at the count of eight to greet the bell ending the round.

But it was only a delay of his fate. Donaire pressed the attack early in the eighth, pounding the Mexican with a barrage in a corner and finishing with a powerful left that prompted referee Charlie Dwyer to halt the fight.

Maldonado's moment came in the third round when he suddenly switched to a southpaw stance in an apparent attempt to confuse Donaire. The Mexican landed a solid punch that rocked Donaire and slowed the Filipino down a bit. But the Filipino Flash recovered toward the end of the round to regain control.

In Manila, the 21-year-old Bautista responded with a flourish in a fight that was billed as his road to redemption.

Needing a victory to put him back in the road to glory after a humiliating first-round defeat to WBO superbantam champ Daniel Ponce de Leon in Sacramento, California, early this year, Bautista flaunted uncanny restraint in outboxing Meza.

At the end of the fight, the judges scored it 118-110, 117-111 and 116-112, all for the Bohol native Bautista.

"I learned a lot from my last bout," Bautista said in Filipino. "I was more careful this time."

Like Maldonado, Meza also flaunted his ability to change stances, switching from orthodox to south paw often to try and confuse Bautista. Unable to solve the puzzle, Bautista could not establish dominance in the first six rounds.

Star-studded crowd

Action picked up in the fourth round after a furious exchange by both boxers, drawing cheers from the star-studded crowd that included the likes of former President Joseph Estrada, son and senator Jinggoy, Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim and former Senators Robert Jaworski and Ramon Revilla Sr.

Bautista was deducted a point in that wild and woolly fourth round after accidentally headbutting Meza, opening up a cut on the Mexican's right eyebrow.

"I really had a hard time figuring out his style because we never got to really scout him," Bautista said. "I only got to study his moves in the ring."

After rocking Meza with solid blows and still failing to floor the Mexican, Bautista started to go for the body. But Meza curled up well enough, forcing the Boholano to land blows dangerously low.

In the main supporting bout, the 18-year-old Banal showed a slot of class in dominating Soto, who never looked like he knew what to do against the Filipino livewire.

In control

Mixing wily counterpunching with solid hits both to head and body, Banal looked in control all throughout the match, except for the fifth and sixth rounds where Soto uncorked a frenzied attack that had the Filipino backing up several times.

Banal finally tagged Soto with a vicious right hook that floored the challenger in the ninth round. And when Soto somehow managed to beat the count, he was met by another overwhelming flurry by Banal, forcing referee Ferdie Estrella to stop the fight at the 2:15 mark of the ninth.

Bautista was in trouble in the sixth round when Meza hit him with a timely left hook.

"I got hurt by that left hook and it's a good thing I was in good shape that's why I was able to recover," Bautista said.

"It's really hard to win outside of your hometown but Boom Boom did well to win the fight. He's good but I fought better fighters," said Meza through interpreter and manager Fernando Dominguez.

With the win, Bautista improved his win to 24-1, with 17 KOs, while Meza dropped to 23-4, 16 of them KOs.

The undefeated Banal, who is being groomed by international matchmaker Sampson Lewkowicz as the country's next world champion, improved to 16-0-1 and 13 KOs.

Successful defense

Milan Milendo also successfully defended his WBO Asia Pacific minimumweight title with a unanimous decision win over Indonesian Jack Amisa via scores of 117-110, 118-109 and 117-110.

Philippine bantam champ Michael Domingo also prevailed by unanimous decision over Tanzanian Anthony Mathias.

Juan Martin "Baj" Elorde, the grandson of the great Flash Elorde, also kept his unblemished record with a unanimous decision win over Cris Dollosin.

ALA Boy Joseph Omanz scored a technical knockout over Albert Cesa with two big lefts at 1:33 of the second round.

In a big upset, unheralded Richie Mepranum took a split decision win over RP flyweight champ Rocky Fuentes in their eight-round non-title battle.

Anton Olarte won over Jason Pagara, and Jesson Perater over Marron Sanchez in separate decisions. *AFP, Salven Lagumbay, contributor*

UP grads called to pre-bash fete

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UP Alumni Association president Ponciano "Chitong" Rivera said the event will the celebration of UP Centennial Year beginning January 2008.

A highlight of the year will be the UPAA Grand Centennial Year Homecoming and Reunion on June 21 at Araneta Coliseum.

Rivera said all UP jubilarians could have their photos taken at a discount at any Kodak Express or Kameraworld store to March 15 for the UPAA 2008 Centennial Yearbook.

Alumni may contact the UPAA office at tel. 920-6868, 920-6871, 920-6875, fax 929-8327 or e-mail up.alum@yahoo.com.

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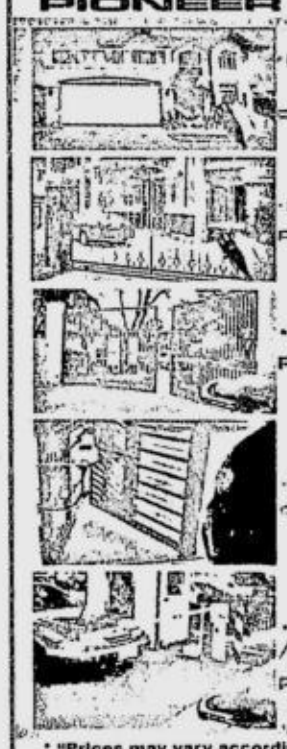

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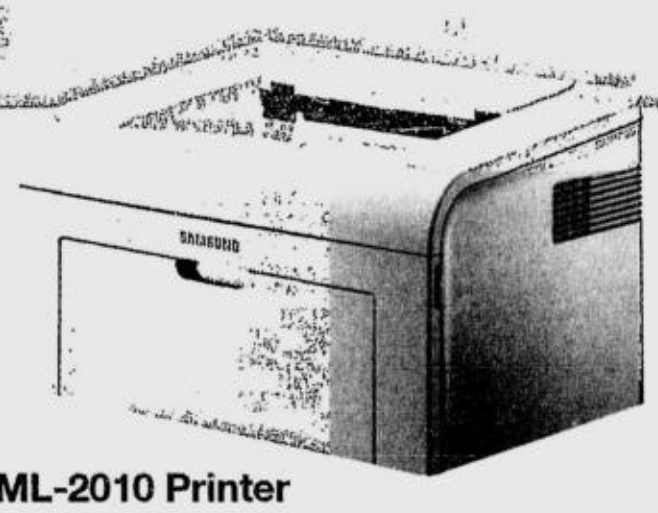

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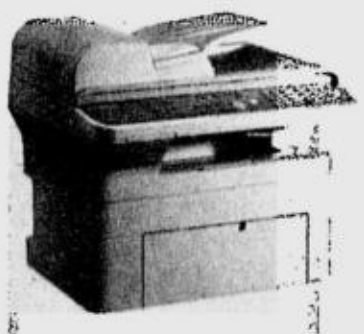

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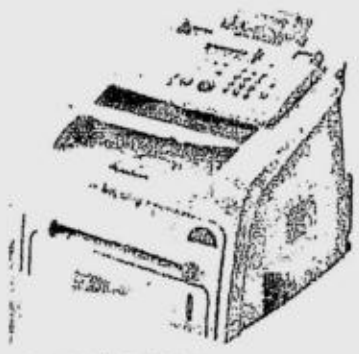

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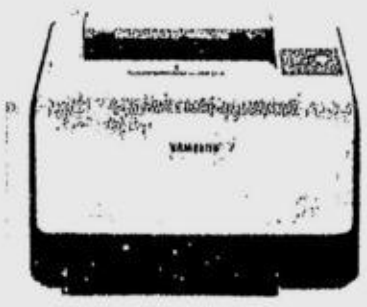

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Senate restores RP debt payments

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

THE SENATE HAS restored P12.1 billion to debt interest payments in its version of the P1.227-trillion 2008 national budget, after the House of Representatives had slashed P17.8 billion for the interest payments in its version of the appropriations bill.

Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, Senate finance committee chair, said he restored P12.1 billion in interest payments for foreign and local loans to the budget "to provide (Malacañang) more leg room for the payment of interest on so-called tainted or fraudulent loans."

In a statement, the Freedom from Debt Coalition said the loans involved were considered illegitimate, which was why the House slashed their allocations from the budget bill.

One of the loans had funded the defunct Telepono sa Barangay project, since abandoned after it was overtaken by cellular phone technology.

Interest and principal payments on the Telepono sa Barangay loan amounting to $6.86 million (approximately P300 million at today's exchange rate) and $4.61 billion (P200 billion), respectively, had been written into the 2008 budget.

"Instead of helping break the momentum of indebtedness and replicating the political courage manifested by the lower house in reclaiming the power of the purse, Senator Enrile has chosen the easy way out—staying loyal to Malacañang's original yet socially parsimonious budget," said FDC president Ana Maria Nemenzo in the statement issued Friday.

Nemenzo said the House's budget version even included a provision suspending service payments for illegitimate debts "pending loan renegotiation and/or condonation."

"This is a step in the right direction. Can the Senate match this bold move and muster the political will to address the issue of illegitimate debts," she said.

Realigned

Malacañang's original version of the budget earmarked P295.7 billion for debt interest payments, which the House slashed to P277.9 billion, or P17.8 billion less, in its version it passed recently. The House realigned the funds to education and health services.

The Senate finance committee allocated P290 million for debt interest payments, slashing Malacañang's allocation by only P5.7 billion based on expected gains from a stronger peso against the dollar.

Aside from interest payments, P328.3 billion was automatically appropriated for payment of principal.

Political stand

"Regardless of what foreign exchange rate they used, the Senate refused to make a political stand against illegitimate debts that continuously drain our national coffers and deprive the people of basic social services they deserve," Nemenzo said.

The Senate last week started daylong plenary sessions to deliberate the budgets of the various government departments.

Its target is to finish the deliberations by Dec. 4, begin the bicameral conference committee meetings shortly after it approves its version of the national budget, and come up with the final version before Congress goes on holiday break on Dec. 22.

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ABS-CBN role probed; TV exec to mutiny probers: Show

From page A1

of them did not leave, maybe it was a directive from their desk)," the official added.

Contrary to government assertions, more than 30 media people from various organizations—not just ABS-CBN—refused to leave the hotel despite police orders for them to withdraw. They included at least three INQUIRER reporters.

The official said the government contacted all media organizations to get their reporters to leave the hotel because the police were set to attack the group led by Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV and Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim.

And because of the network's action, this sparked "doubts," the official said.

"The question is were they there for journalism or were they there conspiring and willingly obstructing justice?"

The official claimed the actions taken by the network had put the lives of the policemen at risk.

Asked whether the network was under investigation, the official replied in the negative.

'It was our job'

But the official said probers were checking an unconfirmed report that an ABS-CBN crew was already at the hotel before Trillanes' group came in. "Actually, we're trying to find out whether they were already at the Peninsula," the official told the INQUIRER.

Maria Ressa, ABS-CBN senior vice president for news and current affairs, said the network did not comply with the government request to leave because it was out there to do its job.

"We were there to show it live nationwide and globally to hold all sides accountable to the public we serve," Ressa said in a phone interview.

"Why would we comply? That was a news event and our job is to show you what happens," she said.

The public, Ressa said, "needed to know what action the authorities were taking in the name of the public."

She found "ludicrous" the statement that the network put the lives of the police in danger by staying behind, saying that the ABS-CBN crew "never stopped them from taking action."

A minor miracle

On why the network was able to set up its communication system at the hotel quickly, Ressa said ABS-CBN deployed its technical team to do a live shot at the hotel as soon as they saw Trillanes holding a press conference.

"We did a minor miracle," she said of the network's speed in doing its job.

Asked whether the network had prior knowledge of Trillanes' action, Ressa said ABS-CBN only received an "alert" very late on Wednesday night "to watch out for troop movements."

"If they have something on us, bring it out. We'll respond," Ressa said.

The senior official said investigators were sifting through the physical evidence and were about to start the tactical interrogation of Trillanes' group.

'People of prominence'

"If the evidence shows that, for instance, there was obstruction of justice and conspiracy, then charges will be filed against anyone," the official said.

Police Director Geary Barias said the authorities would look into the guest list of the Peninsula to see if the Trillanes-Lim group or any of their supporters had made advance reservations before Thursday's event.

Spontaneous or not?

This would help them determine if the group's call for President Macapagal-Arroyo's ouster was a spontaneous act or part of plot.

"It would be interesting to find out if anyone made reservations at the hotel before the incident, or did the Magdalo soldiers just take over these rooms?" the chief of the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) said in a phone interview.

"If ever there were, indeed, reservations for rooms, such as the Rizal function room that was used during the standoff, we want to find out if those who made the reservation were connected to the incident or not, and who paid for those rooms," Barias said.

He said the police were set today to request the hotel management for the list of its guests who checked in as far back as a week before Thursday.

Rizal room

The Rizal function room was where Trillanes, Lim, the other Magdalo soldiers and their civilian supporters were holed up for most of the six-hour standoff that ended when the police launched an attack.

Barias said the police were not speculating on who made reservations at the hotel. "We're just investigating," he said.

Earlier, the INQUIRER asked Barias if a news team from ABS-CBN was among those the police were looking at as having ... hotel.

"It's not only ABS-CBN. W... into who checked in before ... who paid," Barias had said.

He added: "We are not sin... dia. We will also be looking ... group."

When the INQUIRER called a... statement, Barias made clea... pine National Police was no... TV network.

"We don't know if ABS-... them. We will be looking int... checked in a week before (... made reservations. Let's find ... We're not even talking about ... said.

Civilian involvement

Another senior official, ... anonymity because of the ... case, said: "We are looking at ... the Manila Pen before the ... cludes various personalities, i...

For his part, PNP Director ...

JOURNALISTS surround Sen. Teofisto Guingona Jr. in a press ... Manila hotel.

Activist priest's ma appeals ...

By TJ Burgonio

THE FAMILY OF ACTIVIST PRIEST ROBERT Reyes yesterday appealed to Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales to help get him freed from police custody, saying he was not involved in the abortive takeover of the Peninsula Manila hotel.

"If you can help Bishop Labayen, please help Father Robert, too. Get him out of jail," the priest's mother, Natividad Reyes, said in an appeal to the Manila archbishop. "He had nothing to do with it."

Natividad said her son was set to say Mass at the monument to the late Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr. on Ayala Avenue that Thursday morning when he got a call from Jimmy Regalario of the Kilusang Makabansang Ekonomiya (KME) asking that they meet the group of Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV.

It was also Regalario who had asked Reyes to celebrate Mass that day in Makati.

Peace mission

Natividad said her son caught up with Trillanes' group at the Manila Pen and stayed with them, thinking his presence would "prevent bloodshed."

"He wasn't there for the ... there to prevent it. He wasn't ... she said in a phone interview.

"While he and Labayen ... saved the people. Without th... the group, there would have b...

Father Reyes was among se... tained in Camp Crame.

Natividad said her son ... continued to be detained ... beyond the 36-hour period ... allowed by law. "After 36 ... hours, they should have ... been released," she said.

'Way out of darkness'

In a statement, Father Reyes said: "I went to Manila Pen afraid of violence and consciously wanted to promote peace. I've always promoted peace even in dissent. This is what I've found myself doing with Bishop Labayen until the soldiers' decision to surren-

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us what you have

Antonio Trillanes IV, Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim and former Vice President conference during the rebel soldiers' occupation of the Peninsula

ERIK ARAZAS

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who asked for ensitivity of the who checked into ncident. This in- ncluding media."

General Avelino Razon said police investigators were still trying to determine who were involved in the incident.

Razon said the police were looking at the three groups he had mentioned last year, whose participation was outlined in documents authorities discovered in the hotel after the standoff.

Some of the documents listed down aliases.

Asked if the groups were composed of members of the Armed Forces, Razon replied: "Not necessarily."

He said some of the military officers and civilians who were detained following Thursday's hotel siege had been "cooperating" with the police investigation, but he declined to name them.

Asked why he thought the detainees were cooperating, Razon replied: "You treat them right. And they know that we are only after truth and justice."

Razon said some of the detainees' revelations and the documents authorities were able to recover from the hotel had provided investigators with "leads" that would "shed light on what really happened last Thursday."

to Manila archbishop

violence; he was oining Trillanes,"

were there, that se two in front of een violence."

veral civilians de- der."

The "running priest" said he remained in high spirits despite three days of detention.

"We can find a way out this darkness not through violence, arrogance and the abuse of power and authority. God is with those who work for the light and for true freedom," he said.

Still no word from Faeldon, says lawyer

By DJ Yap

THE LAWYER OF MARINE CAPT. NICANOR Faeldon, reported missing after Thursday's siege of the Peninsula Manila hotel, said she still had not received any word from her client as of yesterday.

Trixie Angeles remained unconvinced that Faeldon had escaped, saying he could not have been so elusive as to escape under the noses of "a thousand soldiers [and policemen] surrounding the Manila Pen."

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While she did not have evidence that the military secretly had him in custody, Angeles said she had not eliminated the possibility the authorities were just going through the motions of looking for Faeldon.

P1-million bounty

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She said the P1-million bounty on her client "speaks more about (President Macapagal-Arroyo's) fears than that of the nation's."

"He is dangerous only to the idea that the government can continue in its corrupt and oppressive ways," she said.

Writ of amparo

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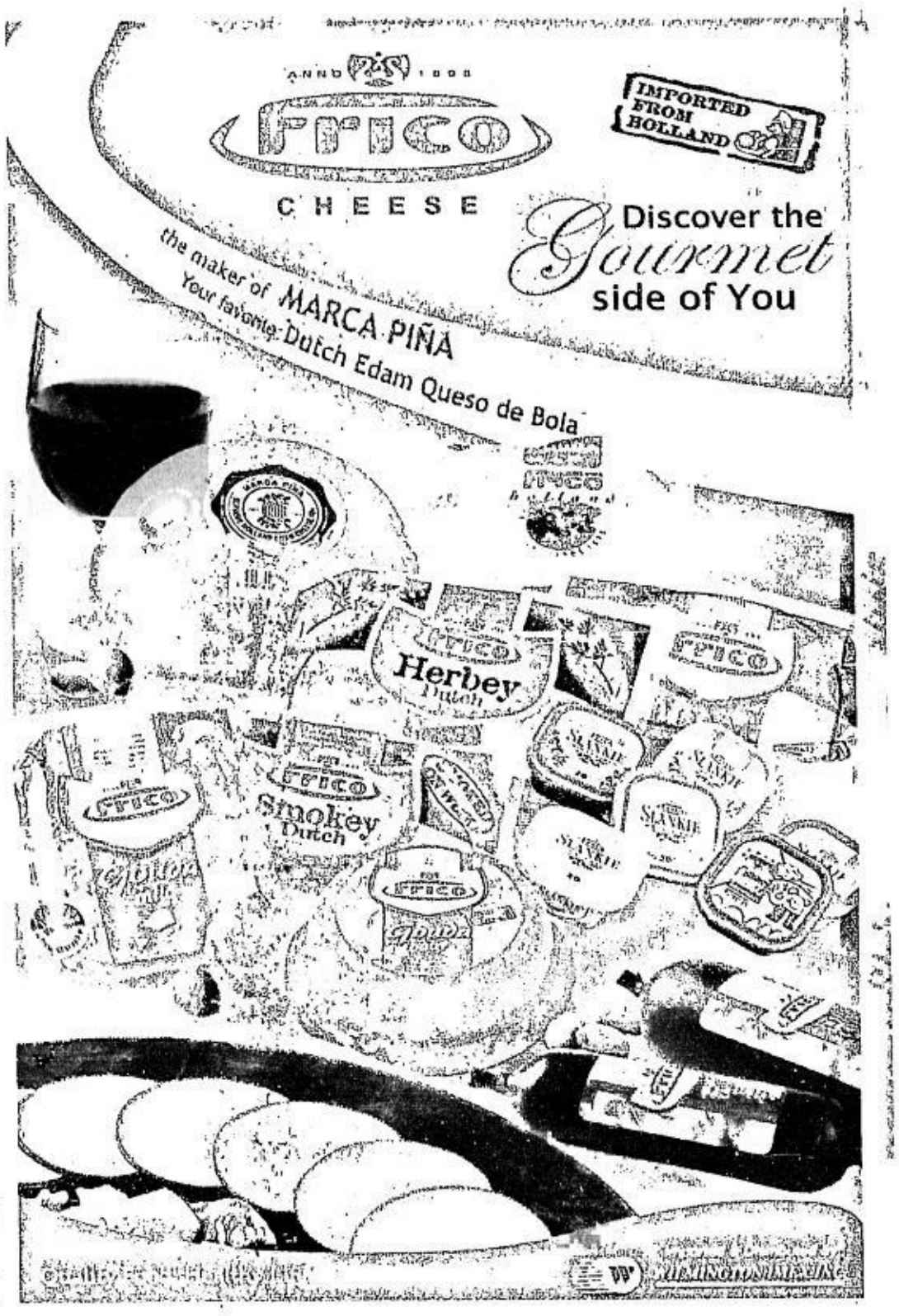
Because of this, she said she could not file a writ of amparo before the Court of Appeals, one of her options.

The writ of amparo is an order issued by a court to compel state agents to look for missing persons.



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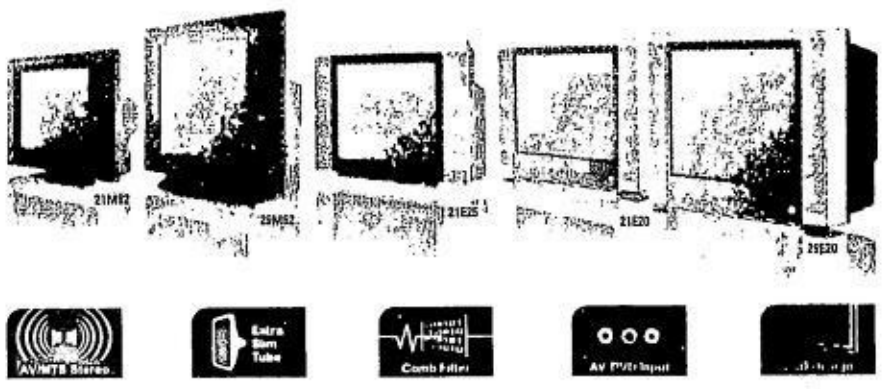

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Antonio Trillanes IV, Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim and former Vice President
conference during the rebel soldiers' occupation of the Peninsula

ERIK ARAZAS

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General Avelino

Razon said police investigators were still trying to determine who were involved in the incident.

Razon said the police were looking at the three groups he had mentioned last year, whose participation was outlined in documents authorities discovered in the hotel after the standoff.

Some of the documents listed down aliases.

Asked if the groups were composed of members of the Armed Forces, Razon replied: "Not necessarily."

He said some of the military officers and civilians who were detained following Thursday's hotel siege had been "cooperating" with the police investigation, but he declined to name them.

Asked why he thought the detainees were cooperating, Razon replied: "You treat them right. And they know that we are only after truth and justice."

Razon said some of the detainees' revelations and the documents authorities were able to recover from the hotel had provided investigators with "leads" that would "shed light on what really happened last Thursday."

to Manila archbishop

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The "running priest" said he remained in high spirits despite three days of detention.

"We can find a way out this darkness not through violence, arrogance and the abuse of power and authority. God is with those who work for the light and for true freedom," he said.

Still no word from Faeldon, says lawyer

By DJ Yap

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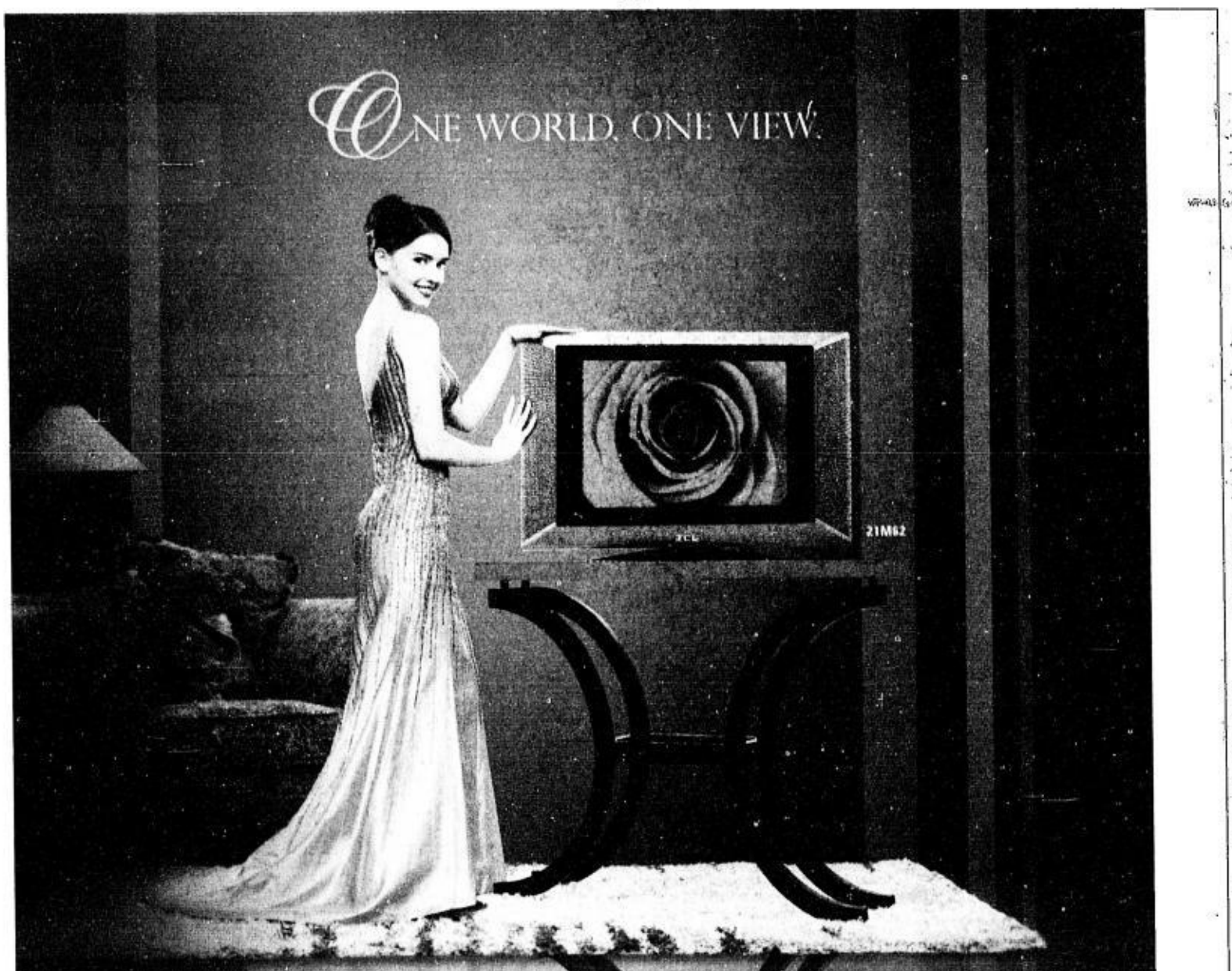

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Muchachos

APPARENTLY, JUSTICE SECRETARY AND RESIDENT Cabinet curmudgeon Raul Gonzalez is not the only one who thinks of Australian lawyer and New York law professor Philip Alston as a "mere muchacho," a lowly errand boy of the United Nations. The chief of staff of the Armed Forces, Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, shares the same contempt for the UN special rapporteur.

EDITORIAL

After Alston submitted to the UN Human Rights Council his final report on "extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions" in the Philippines last week, Esperon belittled Alston's mission, calling it "half-baked."

"I wish Mr. Alston had better and more complete sources," he said. "He was here for 10 days and suddenly he's an expert in human rights in the Philippines, much more an expert in insurgency in the Philippines."

Note the sly use of "suddenly," as though the very idea behind the UN's special missions—almost by definition short-term in nature and dependent on the quality of host-country sources—were somehow invalid. (If that were so, why didn't Esperon object when the Philippine government invited the United Nations to send someone like Alston in the first place? And if that were so, why did Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita wax grateful "for the acknowledgment of the full cooperation we extended to the Special Rapporteur"?)

But we do agree with Esperon. We too wish Alston had "better and more complete sources." But the AFP refused or failed to substantiate its more sensational allegations, including its "purge theory" as the explanation for the killing spree. As the UN Special Rapporteur pointed out, "they relentlessly pushed on me the theory that large numbers of leftist activists are turning up dead because they were victims of internal purges within the CPP and NPA. I repeatedly sought evidence from the Government to support this contention. But the evidence presented was strikingly unconvincing." And then Alston proceeds to list four reasons why the AFP's evidence failed to convince him.

Esperon took Alston to task for being biased against the military; he said the report "is blind on one side [as it] only sees the other side."

But even on the matter of the many alleged victims of the communist New People's Army, the government failed to substantiate its claims too. Alston again: "The Government provided a list of 1,335 individuals, two-thirds of them civilians, allegedly killed by the NPA. Despite numerous requests for any documentation substantiating any of these cases, virtually none was provided. While I have no reason to doubt that the list represents a good faith accounting, without further documentation it is impossible to confirm its reliability or to evaluate which killings violated the humanitarian law of armed conflict."

That these and other paragraphs of the same tenor are integrated into the final report belie Esperon's public relations spin that Alston did not consider the military's side. Another paragraph castigates "the CPP/NPA/NDF's system of 'people's courts' [as] either deeply flawed or simply a sham"—and forcefully suggests that the "Failure to respect due process norms ... may constitute a war crime for participating cadres."

Contrary to what Esperon and other Arroyo administration officials may want the public to believe, the Alston report does not go easy on the communist insurgents. But after due deliberation, it assigns the burden of responsibility for the wave of killings where it finds it: "Two policy initiatives are of special importance to understanding why the killings continue. First, the military's counterinsurgency strategy against the CPP/NPA/NDF increasingly focuses on dismantling civil society organizations that are purported to be 'CPP front groups' ... Second ... the criminal justice system has failed to arrest, convict, and imprison those responsible for extrajudicial executions."

These two policy initiatives are dealt with in detail, in the final report. Gonzalez, Esperon et al. will continue to spin its meaning; but a close and attentive reading will readily prove them wrong. In it we will find that lowly "muchachos" who do their work well will put "hacenderos" and their paid generals to shame.

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Trillanes revolts are warnings to gov't

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE ARROYO ADMINISTRATION IS STRUTting like a peacock because the Trillanes revolt has been crushed. But it should take that as a warning. Groups of people resort to armed uprising when all avenues for peaceful reforms have been closed to them. This administration needs many reforms and people have been trying to accomplish them through legal means—through Congress, through the courts, through peaceful marches and demonstrations—but the administration is deaf and refuses to reform.

In the words of Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim, "We have individually and collectively tried all means to resolve this legitimacy issue [of President Macapagal-Arroyo] through the normal electoral, judicial and congressional processes.

"But Mrs. Arroyo used naked power through the issuance of EO 464 and other executive proclamations, and the sheer weight of numbers to paralyze the impeachment process ... to frustrate us at every turn.

"After all these had failed, our people tried to air their grievances in peaceful street assemblies. They thought they were exercising a combination of constitutional rights ... But they were stopped and dispersed violently with water cannons ... and truncheons.

"The abuses of her government continue. The deliberate refusal of the dubious leaders to investigate and prosecute the people responsible for the scandalous 'Hello Garci' electoral cheating, the Joc-Joc Bolante multimillion-peso fertilizer scam, the Impsa bribery scandal, the Jose Pidal and the *jueteng* scandals, the NBN scandal, wholesale bribery of congressmen and governors in Malacañang, as well as the unabated and unresolved extrajudicial killings of citizens ... are clear proof of failure of good and decent governance."

Is General Lim telling the truth or not?

With all the avenues closed, what are we to do? By preventing the people to use peaceful, legal means, the government is actually forcing the people to use violence. By preventing the people to air their grievances through peaceful street marches and demonstrations, it is denying the people an outlet for their resentment and anger. And if it does that, this anger is bound to explode like a volcano.

The government may have crushed the Oakwood mutiny, the Trillanes revolt and another such attempts, but that will not stop the people's desire for reforms and justice. There will be other "revolts" until one succeeds. Just look at our history.

The journey of the Filipino people to nationhood is replete with many revolts, from Dagohoy and Diego Silang and other pocket revolts until Bonifacio's 1896 Revolution succeeded, only to be squelched by the Americans. Still, the pocket revolts continued in the Sakdalista, the Hukbalahap and even the Medrano uprisings, and now the NPA and the Muslim revolts.

Our history is littered with the bodies of numerous heroes. Maybe history will later list Lim and Trillanes among them. Today, the Arroyo government, the victor, lists them as villains but decades later, with the benefit of hindsight, history will reverse their roles. During the Spanish colonization, the Spaniards looked at the Filipinos who opposed them as "insurrectos" and "bandidos," but today they are our heroes.

* * *

I would like to add my voice and that of Plaridel, the association of journalists, to the numerous denunciations of the arrest of journalists during the Peninsula standoff. Why were they arrested and taken to Camp Bagong Diwa in the first place? What law did they violate? They were just doing their jobs. That's what NCR Police Chief Geary Barias said when he tried to serve the arrest warrant on Trillanes and Lim: "I am just doing my job." So why did his policemen arrest journalists who were just doing their jobs?

The PNP said it was "to process" them (whatever that means). It said some of the Magdalo officers may have posed as members of media, so they wanted to identify each and every journalist before releasing them. I understand that, but some of them are well-known journalists, like Ces Drilon and Pinky Webb of ABS-CBN, and Ellen Tordesillas, columnist and Malacañang reporter of Malaya. Even policemen must have recognized them, so what was the necessity of hauling them off to Camp Bagong Diwa to be identified?

The real reason, as I see it, is not really "identification" but "intimidation." The administration wanted to show to the media people that "we can do this to you, so you better behave." It was intimidation, pure and simple. Except that it made a mistake: journalists are not that easily intimidated.

It reminds me of a similar incident during the Marcos martial law regime when a curfew was also in place. The Philippine Navy invited journalists to a party after deadline on board one of its ships. The journalists thought that the ship would remain docked at the Navy basin on Roxas Boulevard and that they would be able to leave before curfew.

But the ship set sail as soon as they were on board and anchored in the middle of Manila Bay. And stayed there until morning. There was no way we could contact our offices or homes. There were no cell phones then.

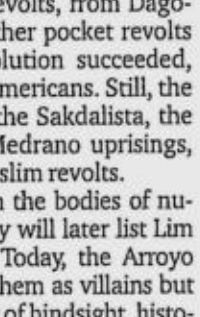
Our respective wives and families were frantic when we failed to get home. They didn't know where we were. They called our offices who told them that we had already left hours ago. So where were we? They called the hospitals, police precincts, even funeral parlors. Nothing. We had disappeared like Jonas Burgos.

What was that caper for? It was intimidation. The military was sending us the message: We can make you disappear without anybody knowing. We can do this to you.

That was the same message the military was sending the journalists in the Makati incident.

Bitter cold

THERE'S THE RUB



Conrado de Quiros

I LEARNED ABOUT IT AT THE MOST UNUSUal hour and the most unusual place. And the effect was, well, rousing.

That was quite literally so. My cell phone started ringing at close to 4 a.m. where I was, which was in a place called Preston, a town more than a couple of hours away from London by train, where we had gone to as part of the program to observe how Muslims were living in the United Kingdom, particularly after 7/7. I had just begun to slide into a deep sleep after a long day and bitter cold, when my phone began ringing shrilly. "Have you heard what's happened?" a friend reported energetically, a preface to a revelation that instantly put the dread in me. I wondered who had just died or was arrested in the Philippines, which almost axiomatically means someone who did not deserve to do so or be so.

He then proceeded to tell me that Danilo Lim and Antonio Trillanes had walked out of their trial in the company of their guards and had holed up in the Peninsula Hotel. They were all set to hold a press conference in an hour or so. A crowd had begun to gather at the hotel, and Malacañang had called for an emergency meeting. Some bishops had gone to the hotel. Another friend texted dramatically, "It's happening...."

I switched on the TV, waited for news of it in BBC, and gave up after an hour. The only overseas news that was repeated again and again was Pervez Musharraf giving up control of the military and donning on civilian clothes as president of his country. There were interviews of several people to determine if his formal cession of military rank really indicated any substantive change—his successor as head of the military was a loyalist protégé—or if the opposition, which had been protesting the validity of his election—he had run for office while head of the armed forces—would be appeased by it. There was nothing on the Philippines.

A few hours later, however, just as we were about to hop on our bus, pictures flashed on the TV of a group of heavily armed men in uniform gathering in what seemed like an incongruously posh location, and an announcer announced that the Philippine police was about to storm a hotel where some military rebels had holed in. But before I could learn more about it, I found myself being dragged away to the bus. These people take their time deathly seriously, and when they say you start off at 8:15, you do not start off at 8:20. Hell, you do not start off at 8:16. My journalist friends, in whose company I was thrown in for the week, were sympathetic. One said, "I bet you wish you were back in your country." Another said: "That's right, it's not just about being a journalist. If that were happening in my country, I'd be worried too about family and friends." They thought it had the makings of civil war.

My mind wandered off for much of the morning, as my cell phone kept ringing (though on silent) for the next couple of hours. I could only pity those who kept sending me text messages, not knowing where I was, their frustration at what took place over those next couple of hours being compounded by a future shock at their Globe or Smart or Sun bill for November. Someone summarized what had happened at the end of those two (long, for me, who was kept in the dark) hours: "It's over." What was happening had clearly stopped happening—if indeed it had any chance of unraveling at all.

I would learn from the Internet later how, like most things in our country today, Danny Lim and Antonio Trillanes' threatened uprising ended with a whimper and not with a bang. Though the staff of Manila Pen and several journalists would probably dispute the lack of a bang altogether. The police and special forces apparently made an overkill of it—the journalist community interpreting it, with good reason, to be an effort not just to quell a mutinous uprising on the part of some military groups but to quell feisty reporting on the part of those groups in media that still believed in a free press—even attempting to squeeze a tank through the Pen's front door with disastrous consequences for its architecture.

I would read some of the blogs later asking what's with Trillanes and hotels—then it was Oakwood, now it's the Pen—and how many more hotels he'd ruin before he's through. Others would ask why anyone would want to try to overthrow someone who would be stepping down after a couple of years or so anyway. I'll deal with those concerns tomorrow and show why my sympathies lie in the opposite direction.

The more thoughtful, and truly depressing, comments came from people via e-mail and text messages. One summarized his dismay in this wise: "Human behavior is content to let others do the work to get for us what we are unwilling to do for ourselves." My own thoughts drifted to Burke's famous line, "All it takes for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing," and I wondered if we hadn't just added whole new dimensions to that in recent days. Here we are confronted by a government that daily regales us with spectacular corruption, corruption of the body and corruption of the soul, the theft of money and the theft of morals, and we are unable do anything about it. And when some people try to do something about it, are too indifferent, too lazy, too insensate, to add our voices to it. All it takes for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing? All it takes for evil to riot is for some good men to do something and for everybody else to think only of Christmas shopping.

I didn't bother to tell my journalist friends about it anymore, but for a while at least I was glad I was out of the country. Some bitter colds are less bitter than others.

Sumilao: Shattered dreams, broken pledges

SOUNDING BOARD

Fr. Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J.

THE MARCHING SUMILAO FARMERS ARE EXpected to enter Manila today. Theirs has not been like the march of the Israelites to the Promised Land; meanwhile, the marchers have been demonized by some quarters. A review of history should place the struggle of the farmers in brighter perspective.

The marching farmers trace their ancestry to Apo Manuagay Anlicao and Apo Mangganlahon Anlicao, Higaonon natives, early settlers of a piece of land in Bukidnon. The land was considered "balaang yuta" for the Higaonons and it was the seat of government for the tribal leaders. The land was called "pinetreehon" by visitors owing to the abundance of pine trees and the cold temperature in the area. As a young Jesuit, I and fellow Jesuit seminarians enjoyed some summer days away from books in refreshing Bukidnon weather.

The Higaonons lost the land by eviction. I do not have a clear picture of how it happened. Eventually, one family won 99.885 hectares where tenants planted rice and corn, and the Quisumbing family won 144 hectares, the current bone of contention.

The 144 hectares became a pineapple plantation under a 10-year Crop Producer and Grower Agreement between the landowner and Del Monte Philippines (DMPI). The Higaonons worked as seasonal farm workers in the area. The lease expired in April 1994.

Immediately thereafter the Higaonon farmers initiated the movement to reclaim the land of their ancestors under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program. Their effort to reclaim the 144 hectares became the subject of litigation moving from the Department of Agrarian Reform, to the Office of the President and finally three times to the Supreme Court. I shall not enter into the nitty gritty of the case. Let me just cite some key developments.

The initial skirmishes on the DAR level favored the farmers. In 1990, DAR served notice placing the 144 hectares under CARP coverage and in 1992 served a notice of valuation to the owner of the property. But DAR suspended implementation because the property was still under lease.

Before the expiration of the lease agreement, however, the landowner applied for conversion of the land from agricultural to agro-industrial. The petition was supported by the municipality of Sumilao and by a Resolution of the Sanggunian Panlalawigan of Bukidnon. It contained the glowing promises of how the 144 hectares would be developed:

- 24 hectares would contain a **Development Academy of Mindanao** consisting of an Institute for Higher Education, Institute for Livelihood Science, Institute for Agri-Business Research, Museum, Library, Cultural Center and Mindanao Sports Development Complex.
- 67 hectares would contain a **Bukidnon Agro-Industrial Park** consisting of a processing plant for corn oil, corn starch and various corn products; cassava processing for starch, alcohol and food delicacies; processing plants for fruits and fruit products such as juices; processing plants for vegetables; cold storage and ice plant; cannery system; commercial stores; public market and abattoir.
- 33 hectares for **Forest Development** including open spaces and parks for recreation, horse-back riding, mini animal zoo.
- 20 hectares for **Support Facilities** including a 360-room hotel, restaurants, dormitories and housing project.

This was touted by the promise, cited even by the Supreme Court, that "The proposed project is petitioners' way of helping insure food, shelter and lifetime security of the greater majority of Sumilao's 22,000 people."

The governor of Bukidnon championed the cause of the landowner and appealed to the President arguing that "agricultural development will never take place if the area will be given to landless farmers, tenants and other qualified farmer beneficiaries." But that did not prevent a sympathetic DAR from transferring the title of the property to the Republic and issuing Certificates of Land Ownership Award (CLOA) to 137 farmers and registering them in the Register of Deeds.

In March 1996, however, Malacañang reversed the decision of DAR, saying among others that "converting the land in question would open great opportunities for employment and bring about real development in the area towards a sustained economic growth in the municipality."

In 1997, when trouble ensued, President Fidel Ramos modified the previous decision with a "win-win" solution limiting the conversion to 44 hectares and approving 100 hectares for distribution to farmers. When the "win-win" solution was challenged in the Supreme Court, it was declared invalid for being an attempt by Ramos to reverse his own decision which had already become final. To no avail did Justices Reynato Puno and Jose Melo argue that procedural rule on finality should give way to a consideration of the substance of the issue, as the Court often does. Subsequent attempts to persuade the Supreme Court to have a change of heart failed.

Meanwhile, here is the tragic part: What happened to the rosy promise of development which would assure the Sumilao inhabitants a better life? The landowner forgot about it. Instead, in 2002 the landowner sold the land to San Miguel Foods Inc.

The Conversion Order of 1997 contained the condition that "The landowner and future landowner(s) of the property approved for conversion shall not change its use to another use not authorized under the conversion order without prior consent from the DAR."

By 2005 no development had happened in the property. Now, however, I am told that SMFI has started rushing the setting up of a piggery! The rosy development project for the farmers will favor the pigs! Meanwhile, the President has asked DAR to decide whether the unfulfilled conversion order still holds. *Abangan*!

Anthony, I'll see you at the 'Nineteenth'

REVEILLE

Ramon J. Farolan

JUST A FEW LINES ON THE PENINSULA TAKEOVER.

I do not know if this was a planned action on the part of Trillanes and company. If it was, it was poorly executed. From the way I saw things on television, it looked more like a spur-of-the-moment move, hoping to generate support from sympathizers and other sectors of society. This did not materialize.

But I can understand the frustrations of Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV and his fellow Magdalo officers. Their case has dragged on for more than four years with no end in sight. The saying goes that "justice delayed is justice denied." So much for the rule of law.

Let me try to put things in their proper perspective. What Trillanes did may have been wrong but sometimes it is necessary to create situations that focus attention on continuing cases of grave injustice and a growing culture of impunity.

Trillanes was elected senator by a large number of our people. He was not allowed to take his place in the Senate. In securing victory, he did not engage in *dagdag-bawas* operations. He did not engage in massive vote-buying, using taxpayer money. He did not communicate with election officials on how he was doing at the polls. He did not have movie stars and assorted entertainers working on his behalf. He was under detention in Fort Bonifacio during the campaign period.

How many of our "elected" officials can claim victory under similar conditions?

One last word. The picture of handcuffed media personnel being "invited" to Bicutan reminded me of American troops rounding up suspected Iraqi insurgents. Those news clips flashed around the world to millions of viewers courtesy of CNN and BBC caused more damage to the image of our country than anything Trillanes did.

* * *

One of the most fascinating sports in the world is the "royal and ancient game" of golf. The name comes from the Dutch word for club—kolf. But it was in Scotland that the game was first played in a manner similar to the modern version and today the rules of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews are generally followed by clubs all over the world.

Some people refer to golf as a thinking man's game. More than brute strength, speed, height or stamina, what is required for success in the sport is a creative mind, one that will make up for those physical qualities or attributes that are usually in short supply among average, sports-minded individuals. One of the most important traits of a good golfer is mental toughness, a strength that will enable him to maintain a high level of confidence and concentration under difficult circumstances and in the face of all sorts of distractions, from the flash of a camera to the sound of an aircraft flying overhead. Mental toughness also implies the ability to erase or to expunge from the mind a disastrous failure in one hole and moving on to the next without loss of focus and composure.

Golf is a game for people who know how to count accurately and do not resort to cheating in order to win. Surprisingly, there are a lot of politicians playing the sport. But they make "bawas" rather than "dagdag."

Last week one of the bright lights of Philippine golf passed away after a losing battle with the Big C. For many years, Anthony Fernandez was a permanent fixture in the local golfing scene either as a national team player, an official of some golfing association, the manager of a golf club or a regular member of a number of foursomes all over the country.

Anthony was the eldest son of the late Estanislao Fernandez, a prominent Laguna lawyer who was elected senator in 1957, partly on the strength of his reputation as the "savior of Lydia Dean."

For those not too familiar with the story, Lydia Dean, a Filipina married to an American, was accused of murdering her husband. Fernandez was a member of her defense team in the United States that secured Dean's acquittal. Upon his return to the country, he was given a hero's welcome and hailed in the media as the savior of Lydia Dean. In 1975, Senator Fernandez was appointed Associate Justice of the Supreme Court by President Ferdinand Marcos.

The other members of the Fernandez brood are Victor, a deputy Ombudsman; Carlos, a former transportation undersecretary; Sylvia Lacson; Lina Litton; and Arturo, the last two both deceased.

My association with Anthony was relatively brief. As expected, it was the love of the game that brought us together just a few years back. When I first met him, I was struck by his stylish attire on the golf course. When we were wearing long pants or Bermuda shorts, his were just below the knee in bright patterns—you couldn't miss him. He had a reputation of having been a "scratch" player. For non-golfers, this meant that he carried no handicap. It also meant that he was one of the best.

At our first meeting, he offered to give me four strokes per nine holes, or eight for the round of 18. Like a fool, I accepted the arrangement and of course got clobbered, losing a small fortune in the process. At our next meeting, I decided to accept the same handicapping but ruled out any bets. I won—or did he let me win? The victory brought back my confidence and so in our next engagement, I went along with the same handicap and agreed to another wager of the same amount as before. Guess what. I got clobbered again. So, at our fourth meeting I said let's just have a friendly game, same handicap but no bets. With a Mona Lisa smile, he agreed. Of course, I won—or did he make me win?

In our golfing circle—Rene Francisco, Ben Lim, Monray Mapa, Boy Paiso and Romy David—Anthony, with his lean frame, was "Arnold Schwarzenegger," after the California governor who started on the road to fame as a muscleman in body-building contests. Anthony took the ribbing good-naturedly with a sense of humor that said his would be the last laugh after the game. And very often indeed, he had the last laugh.

One of the things I tried to imitate about Anthony's game was his golf swing. He had a beautiful swing, smooth and effortless, just as he had an eye for beauty—think Criselda Lontok-Fernandez, a lady of style and fashion.

In his lengthy golfing career Anthony came up with four holes-in-one and a roomful of trophies and awards. For a dedicated golfer, you couldn't ask for more.

Anthony, I'll see you at the "nineteenth," beyond the clouds, where all our drives will be long and accurate, each swing a thing of beauty and every par three, a hole-in-one guaranteed by the Great Golfer above.

Paradise lost

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Noralyn Mustafa

TAGUIMA (ALSO TAGUIMAHA), NOW KNOWN as Basilan, is one of the most fertile islands in the country. Everything that grows in Jolo grows in Basilan. But it has something that Jolo used to have but doesn't anymore—rubber, which died a natural death because the Tausugs didn't know how to process it, didn't have any use for it and so didn't care to propagate it.

Multinational companies were quick to see the tremendous potential of the province that was worth more than its weight in gold, and established rubber processing plants and pepper plantations. The University of the Philippines was awarded a land grant for agricultural development.

In the 18th century, a French delegation visited the Sultan of Sulu (Taguima was part of the Sultanate's territory) to negotiate a lease agreement covering the entire island, where they wanted to replicate what England made of Hong Kong—an international trading port.

In the early '70s an Air Force officer who had just earned an MBM degree from the Asian Institute of Management told me with understandable enthusiasm about his plan to study a proposal to "transfer Sabah to Basilan," in his own words.

This meant asking Sabah traders to set up business in the island province, where dealers and retailers could purchase their inventory at almost the same price as at the source, less the risks and hassles of the "shipper" system, in use up to now.

A cousin and I spent the good part of a summer vacation with an older cousin and his family in Balas, in Basilan. She was 9, I was 8; it was the age of wonder. We woke up each morning to a whole orchestra of bird sounds, found strange but edible fruits in the lush jungle. One fruit that fascinated me had the smooth skin, color and size and shape of the pomegranate, but instead of sweet juicy rubies inside, it looked and tasted exactly like atis, with the same smell, pulp and seeds!

And we bathed and fetched water from a clear, cool pond with water endlessly flowing from a mysterious source in the huge boulders. The water was potable.

Balas was the place where we saw Hiawatha and Minihaha frolicking in the forest primeval; butterflies were fairies in disguise and the descendants of Merlin the magician hid behind every tree.

In the afternoons we read the "G.I." pocketbooks in my cousin's collection. These were small pocketbooks, mostly romances and adventure stories, issued to American soldiers during World War II. They were bound and printed horizontally, probably to make it easier for the battle-weary soldier to shove it into his breast pocket with room enough for his pack of Lucky Strike, Zippo lighter and a Chiclet or two.

And in those sultry scented evenings we fought over who got to sit in the rocking chair and we sat by the window waiting for the *balbalan* (a creature like the *manananggal*) that the women in the plantation told us abounded in the place, completely convinced that any of the huge bats that flew by could be one.

It was in one of those evenings while waiting to feed our imagination that my cousin taught me "Autumn Leaves." To this day this beautiful song reminds me of that summer in paradise.

And there is Malamawi island. The Alanos had great plans of making it a resort, with its white sand beaches and unpolluted emerald waters. It is so near the main island that my cousin—already a great swimmer at that age—and I, who wasn't, vowed to return and try to swim across.

But life can be unkind to a child's dream. Other priorities—Qur'an reading, summer carnivals, Girl Scouting—took away our summers. I never got to return to Taguima when it was still paradise.

I did visit it a few times later out of necessity, as a journalist, grown beyond the wonderful age of believing, schooled and trained to believe only in facts and the truth, as in verifiable, ruled not by imagination but by the maxim of the empirical.

Paradise was lost.

Nothing much had changed. The same dirt roads, the same lack of basic services—so shocking in an island so rich.

In real life it was called Basilan, and it was the setting not of The Song of Hiawatha, but of the Abu Sayyaf and the factual events that they caused: the Siege of Basilan, the kidnapping and mutilation of teachers, the hostaging of the Burnhams, the beheading of soldiers—all the blood and gore and man's inhumanity to man, all the stuff of fiction and movies that are so difficult to confront in real life, that journalists are compelled by their calling to witness and report.

And today we are again witnessing another bloody episode in the sad story of Taguima. It is a real-life drama of murder, power struggle, politics and clan rivalry. Yet it is a story where there are no heroes and no villains.

Because however tragic or compelling is this story, it is only a small frame in the bigger picture of the history of Basilan, which itself is only a part of the saga of the "Moro" and colonization and predatory false prophets, his struggle to remain free with his identity intact, his anxious yearning to fit himself into the predominant scheme of things.

But he has to operate within the parameters of a built-in tragic flaw—his failure to come to terms with "democracy." After so many decades he still has to reconcile its principles with his cultural—not religious—idiosyncrasies.

And, he still has to realize that in a game not of his own making, he cannot make the rules.

* * *

Comments to rubaiyat19@yahoo.com

War freaks

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

VICTORY HAS A HUNDRED FATHERS, BUT DEfeat is an orphan. Galeazzo Ciano, Mussolini's son-in-law, famously wrote that in his diary. Writing in his own diary, Ferdinand Marcos put it another way. "There is nothing as successful as success!" he crowed, two days after he engineered the coup known as martial law. If we tend to adore winners, regardless of how they win, the most contemptible among Filipino traits is our tendency to kick a man when he is down. As soon as Antonio Trillanes IV bowed his head in defeat, the hooting began.

I find it interesting, though, that the hooting took place the moment the government proclaimed victory, and not a moment before. As soon as Trillanes said he would once again go into captivity, the kicking, accompanied by hooting, began. Text messages of a mocking nature began to fly thick and fast, ferocious comments began to be made in the blogs, and all were of the same frame of mind: Trillanes should have been shot, or failing that, he should have shot himself rather than surrender.

This is the same sort of behavior we see on the news, every day: a snatcher is apprehended, and only after the culprit is in the hands of the authorities do suddenly indignant citizens parade before the cameras, taking turns slapping the suspect (who sometimes turns out to have been a hapless bystander).

Because it's worth a thousands words, this column includes this picture. From the moment I saw this man on TV, I sensed the Peninsula takeover was doomed. Coups can't involve clowns. And this is why I think the best description for the whole thing was that it was a caper, "an activity or escapade, typically one that is illicit or ridiculous."

Whether or not Trillanes and Danny Lim honestly believed, that Romulo Neri would suddenly show courage and join them in order to spill the beans on the President; or that the senator and the general had reason to think their bolting their trial would trigger defections within the Armed Forces; or if they actually thought people would throw caution to the winds and join them in the hotel, before either men had made it clear what, exactly, they wanted: fact is, the moment this man in the wig made his appearance, the whole thing was obviously destined to be a farce.

But the capering wasn't solely the doing of the rebels. I'd have said that the biggest damned fool in the country last Thursday was Senator Trillanes, except there was a bigger damned fool, and that was Vivian Yuchengco. If Generalissima Yuchengco were calling the shots, we would have had a blood bath courtesy of that stock market virago. Curiously, the real soldiers in the Armed Forces washed their hands off the whole matter: never have so many generals been so obviously tongue-tied as they were that day. Even the police, true to form, decided to restrict their bullying to unarmed civilians from the media, while treating the holed-up senator and his companions with kid gloves.

I do believe Trillanes crossed a line a mature appreciation of his being a senator should have prevented him from crossing. But what now? Should he resign, or be removed from the Senate?

On what grounds? For being a brat, when he got upset because he hasn't been allowed to do his work and serve in the Senate? Lito Lapid and Bong Revilla have all the freedom in the world and have nothing to show for their being in the Senate anyway, except their continued affiliation with the administration. Or is Trillanes a bully, and thus, no longer qualified to be senator? Maybe, because he doesn't do his bullying in lawyerlike fashion like Juan Ponce Enrile or Joker Arroyo.

Trillanes has been judged lacking in judgment, in being ill-tempered, ill-mannered and brash—a lunatic. A Miriam Defensor-Santiago. And yet Santiago is there, so obviously allegations of lunacy per se can't be an obstacle to continued public service or promotion to international bodies. Party affiliation is the difference between eccentricity and lunacy.

Should he remain in office, because he has a mandate? But Juan Miguel Zubiri is there, so obviously 11 million genuine votes mean nothing, anyway. So, we are left with President Macapagal-Arroyo's favorite line, "let he who is without sin, cast the first stone," and her favorite loophole: if you are affiliated with the administration, throwing stones is perfectly legal and to be encouraged.

So maybe this explains why those scared to death between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. on Thursday, ferociously demand blood, now. It's a numbers game, and never mind if the numbers seemed missing for those crucial few hours, because nothing succeeds like success!

As the government prepares to throw the book at Trillanes, maybe that man with the wig was far less ridiculous than he seemed at first blush. What's a man in a wig compared to the officials and their friends, who wanted it all to end, not with a whimper the way it did, but with oceans of blood and as much destruction as possible? What's an incoherent, posturing senator compared to the parade of government Tarzans whose chief regret is they weren't able to atom bomb Makati?

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Physicians' fears unfounded

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

WE ARE GLAD THAT THE PHILIPPINE College of Physicians (PCP) expressed, in a full-page advertisement, their unqualified support for the efforts to bring down the cost of medicines. (INQUIRER, 11/25/07) However, we believe that their fears about the effects of a Cheaper Medicine law on therapeutic efficacy and safety are unfounded and are non-sequitur.

First of all, the Cheaper Medicine bill seeks to address the lack of affordable medicines for Filipinos. It does not replace the physicians' authority and responsibility in determining the appropriate and safe treatment for their patients with the "practice-of-medicine-at-the-drugstore-counter," as PCP alleges. In fact, the Cheaper Medicine bill seeks to broaden the medical treatment and options available for both the physicians and their patients by making medicines more accessible and affordable to the public.

PCP's argument—that making medicines affordable would undermine drug safety and efficacy—has no basis in fact. No less than the World Health Organization (WHO) has been actively campaigning for the use of generic equivalent to medical treatment, even encouraging physicians to issue prescriptions using generic names only.

Surely the members of PCP will not deny the fact that one of the reasons why most Filipinos have not followed prescribed treatment is because of their lack of capacity to buy prescribed medicines. Statistical data show that in 2006, a meager 2.9 percent is being spent on medical care by a Filipino family. Most of the branded medicines that are prescribed by physicians for the Top 10 leading causes of morbidity in the Philippines have equivalent generic preparations that have been proven to be just as effective and safe as their branded counterpart.

The members of PCP while claiming to support the spirit behind the Cheaper Medicines bill have totally misunderstood its principles. The bill goes beyond the issue of generic versus branded medicines. It means to uphold the right of patients to choose, and have access to affordable and quality medicines; the core principle of which is protecting and promoting the right to life of patients. This is a fundamental principle which the PCP members should fully understand as health professionals who have made the solemn vow to protect the sanctity of an individual's life.

While PCP remains preoccupied with its unfounded fears about generic and cheaper medicines, indigent patients are being deprived of their right to have access to safe and affordable medicines.

—NYMIA PIMENTEL-SIMBULAN, Ph.D., chair, EDELIZA P. HERNANDEZ, executive director, Medical Action Group Inc. (MAG), 45 St. Mary St., Cubao, Quezon City

Atienza's bold anti-logging move in Samar

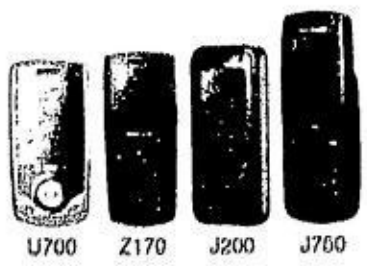
I READ THE INQUIRER'S NOV. 19 ARTICle "Renewed logging in Samar suspended." I must say that the report comes at the right time. As I write this, a key climate conference involving leaders of 16 countries is being held in Singapore. Next month, a crucial 11-day forum headed by the Nobel Prize awardee Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) will be staged in Bali, Indonesia, to adopt positive measures for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Participants of the Dec. 3-14 Bali forum will draft a two-year "road map" that will determine the fate of Planet Earth.

According to the news report, Environment Secretary Lito Atienza's predecessor gave a big-time firm a permit to resume logging operations in more than 50,000 hectares in Samar. To most regional officials of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, this practically lifted the logging moratorium in Samar. But Atienza issued an order to stop the firm from resuming operations. He said he would strictly implement the log ban enforced in Samar and in other areas. Atienza finds it alarming that the DENR would educate people to "plant trees, climb mountains," and then allow logging firms to cut trees.

There are many proposals to mitigate global warming. Examples of such proposals are the reduction in the use of vehicles (reduce miles driven from 10,000 to 5,000 miles per year for 2 billion vehicles), the replacement of 1,400 gigawatts of coal power plants with natural gas, and the addition of 2 million 1-megawatt windmills (50 times the current capacity). According to Nobel Prize winners Stephen Pacala and Robert Socolow of Princeton University, the program for the mitigation of global warming should include the prevention of deforestation and the reestablishment of 300 million hectares of tree plantations.

We laud Atienza's efforts. I know he is also fighting his own version of the battle for climate change. He is under extreme pressure too from some sectors. But he stood by his principles. He is a good leader whose examples should be emulated by the youth.

—IMMANUEL V. ENCARNACION, iman_encarnacion@yahoo.com



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Why many Filipinos are indifferent to pardon

FOR MANY FILIPINOS, THE GRANT OF PARdon to former President Joseph Estrada, just a month after he was convicted of plunder, caused little surprise. The public response has been mixed, with most of the negative reactions coming from the elite. The masses seem to have welcomed the pardon. However, many other ordinary Filipinos, who are not necessarily fond of Estrada, greeted the pardon with either indifference or relief.

President Macapagal-Arroyo's act of pardoning Estrada is only the latest manifestation of a long tradition that has seen Filipino leaders treating with leniency predecessors accused of wrongdoing. This tradition goes back to the period immediately following World War II, when top officials convicted of collaborating with the Japanese invaders were granted a general amnesty.

Ordinary Filipinos have become accustomed to seeing such politically driven pardons and intramurals between rival factions of the ruling elite and they seem to have grown tired of the political contests in their country. For them, the tradeoff from such pardons and from a restrained response (not to indulge in street protests) is political stability and economic growth—two things that have long eluded the Philippines though enjoyed abundantly by our Southeast Asian neighbors: Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam and lately, Indonesia. Indeed, most ordinary Filipinos do not seem to be bothered by the pardon, most probably because they see the decision as one that opens the door to national healing and stability, never mind that it sets back the country's anti-corruption drive and efforts to uphold the rule of law.

Political contests are normal in a democratic society but the instability that could arise from too much politics can be minimized if stability and bureaucratic autonomy hold sway. Political stability is at the heart of most of Asia's successful economies; it allowed for, among other things, the nurturing of a technocratic bureaucratic ethos—something that is generally absent in many developing countries like the Philippines.

Noted political scientist Chalmers Johnson of the University of California notes that a prerequisite for political leaders pursuing long-term development programs is the capacity to depoliticize key economic decisions. He and others have researched how the more successful countries in East Asia achieved this by entrusting such decisions to a "nonpolitical elite," sheltered to some degree from direct political pressures and able to justify its decisions in terms of the greater public good.

—MAGDALENA MENDOZA, MPA graduate student (Li Ka-Shing Scholar), Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore

Busted Sta. Mesa pipe still unattended

I HAVE E-MAILED MAYNILAD WATER SERvices Inc. a couple of times, several weeks ago, but it seems it is not interested to act on the problem. A busted pipe in the middle of the street right outside Queensland Lodge in Sta. Mesa, Manila has been wasting gallons and gallons of precious water for several months now. The cost of the wasted water will eventually be charged to legitimate subscribers of Maynilad. Is this the reason Maynilad is totally nonchalant about this matter? Is this the reason it refuses to take any serious action?

I am merely a concerned citizen living in Manila who values precious water which has become so expensive ever since water distribution in the metropolis was privatized.

—FERNANDO A. DE SEQUERA JR., itoseq@pldtdsl.net

Still working, still taxed

THIS IS IN REACTION TO THE NEWS REport titled "Legarda takes swipe at Teves over taxes for seniors." (INQUIRER, 11/24/07) Sen. Loren Legarda is right. I am now 69 years old and still working. But my savings amount to only P100,000.

Will the government continue to impose a tax on my savings in the bank?

Where is the logic here?

—ROSAURO FELICIANO, rosaurof@yahoo.com

President hostage to guns of gov't troops

From page A1

the event. Authorities imposed a curfew without a proclamation of national emergency by the President of the Republic. Shortcuts on civil liberties were decided and made solely by security authorities, reducing the civilian government to a passive bystander.

These events in the aftermath of the crushing of the last week's coup attempt define the tortured path of the consolidation of Philippine democracy after the overthrow of Ferdinand Marcos' dictatorship in 1986. They highlight the fragility of democracy and the ever-present danger of military intervention as the arbiter of political crisis lurking just underneath the surface of our unstable democracy.

RP pattern

These events also differentiate the pattern of the Philippines' return to democracy from that of several Asian countries, including Indonesia, Thailand, Burma (Myanmar) and Pakistan, during the democratic "third wave" of the 1980s in developing countries.

The classical pre-1980 scenario of coups in these countries shows tanks rolling in the streets, troops seizing government offices as well as radio and telecommunication stations, and a cabal of generals announcing on TV the formation of "a revolutionary government of national salvation."

None of the coup attempts and military mutinies in the Philippines since Edsa I People Power uprising in 1986 have replicated this scenario. Last week's coup attempt was strikingly atypical.

The most ridiculous aspect of the latest coup attempt as well as the 2003 Oakwood mutiny, which was also led by Trillanes, is that it was staged in a hotel. In my journalism career, I have covered the Army coup against Algerian President Ahmed Ben Bella in June 1964 during the Second Bandung Afro-Asian conference, the 1966 coup of General Suharto against President Sukarno of Indonesia, Marshal Lon Nol's ouster in 1970 of Cambodian Prince Norodom Sihanouk who was in Paris, and the 1969 military coup in Bangkok.

In all these coups, tanks occupied the seat of power, while troops seized the radio-TV stations and closed newspaper offices. These were followed by the announcement of a new military government.

I have never seen a coup launched in a five-star hotel.

Past military interventions

Two regime changes in which the Armed Forces intervened (those of Edsa 1 in 1986 and Edsa 2 in 2001) were a porous mix of the participation by the military and civil society. In the February 1986 coup, the military was deeply split, followed by massive civilian participation behind the mutinous faction, and the defection of military units to the rebel side.

In 2003, the Estrada administration collapsed after the AFP general staff pulled out its support. As a result of this benign type of military intervention Filipino-style, the constitutionally mandated supremacy of civilian authority over the military has never been firmly established.

Trillanes and Lim walked out of their trial at the Makati regional trial court and proceeded to seize the Peninsula, held a press conference to demand the resignation President Macapagal-Arroyo and announce the formation of a "revolutionary transition government."

With a handful of armed followers, Trillanese and Lim called on military units to join their mutiny, and civilians to mass in the streets to manifest their abandonment of an abusive, corrupt and "illegitimate" government.

Without having done their homework to secure support from military units and civilian organizations, however, it was sheer suicide to try to bring down a government by mere issuance of stirring manifestos.

Delusions

Trillanes and Lim presumed the mutiny would spark a ground swell of military defections as a patriotic duty of the Armed Forces as protector of the state and people. The two deluded themselves into believing that people would flock behind their banner, as the people did in Edsa I and II.

Particularly self-deluded was Trillanes who was so full of himself that he surmised that because he was elected senator with more than 11 million votes, he had a big constituency he could summon. None of the mutineers' expected constituencies in the Armed Forces and civil society responded.

In the 2003 Oakwood mutiny, Trillanes' cabal assumed military defections and civilian mass support would be coming to its aid. None materialized. In February 2006, Lim expected that his march with mutinous Marines to Ayala Avenue to link up with anti-Arroyo civil society groups would snowball into a mass movement and spark military defections.

Trillanes and Lim repeated the same errors last week. Small wonder their plans collapsed. They were betrayed by their illusions. They were brought back to the ground when an armored personnel carrier stormed into the hotel and government troops bombarded them with tear gas.

Role of media

The mutineers surrounded themselves with media people, all aching to report a good story. Trillanes and Lim used them as shields. They knew the media shield provided them immunity from violence. They knew that government forces could not assault them without slaughtering media people. That would have provoked international outrage against the Arroyo administration.

Never in the past have media people been arrested, handcuffed and manhandled for covering conflict and investigated for involvement in an insurrection, regardless of where their sympathies lay. The charge that media people were obstructing police operations does not wash and is a poor excuse.

Police brutality

Media people, especially photographers and TV crews, perform best when their movements are unrestricted. They situate themselves where they can take the best angle of the action—most especially police brutality.

Their official IDs should be sufficient to identify media people. They should not be subjected to political loyalty test. This restriction is unwarranted and unacceptable, a breach of journalistic freedom and responsibility to serve the public right to know.

President Macapagal-Arroyo tried to reassure the public that police procedures were not meant to restrict press freedom. "We are not at war with the media," she said. The least the police could have done was not to interfere in movement of media people.

Still smoldering

The Peninsula insurrection may have collapsed, but the grievances that drove the rebels to desperate action remain smoldering underneath unless addressed seriously. The crisis has revealed Malacañang had lost control of coping with emergencies to security forces which determined how to crush rebellions their own way.

There are more than enough grievances to feed plots inside the military to seize power. The more serious plotters have learned the lesson that they can't seize power by turning their guns at hotels. The next time around, the guns will be blazing at Malacañang.

That's what the failures of Trillanes and Lim at the Oakwood and Peninsula mutinies have taught us. Ms Arroyo is hostage to the guns of her praetorian guard which she had unleashed at Peninsula.

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After tumult at home, GMA prays at Lourdes

From page A1

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo is escorted by Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon during the send-off ceremony for her at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport. MALACAÑANG-PCPO PHOTO

ren during her brief stop at the pilgrimage town at the foot of the Pyrenees, kicking off her eight-day state and official visits to Spain and the United Kingdom.

She was due to arrive in Madrid at 4 p.m. yesterday (11 p.m. in Manila), said Press Undersecretary Robert Rivera, for a four-day state visit upon the invitation of King Juan Carlos I and Queen Sofia de Grecia.

The Spanish monarchs will host today a private lunch at the Palacio de la Zarzuela, the official residence of the Spanish royalty, for Ms Arroyo—the second Philippine President to officially visit Spain. The first was her father, Diosdado Macapagal, in 1962.

The First Family landed in France on board a chartered Philippine Airlines flight that left Manila on Saturday, in time for the Sunday Mass at Lourdes, where Bernadette, a miler's daughter, saw apparitions of the Virgin Mary in the cave of Massabielle beginning in February 1858.

The visit to Lourdes was off limits to the media.

The large presidential delegation includes Secretaries Ignacio Bunye, Peter Favila, Arthur Yap and Alberto Romulo, and Senators Edgardo Angara, Miriam Defensor-Santiago and Juan Miguel Zubiri, 35 congressmen and 93 businessmen.

The Lourdes stop included a visit to the Chapel of Reconciliation, attendance at the Eucharistic Celebration and a lunch hosted by the Catholic bishops at the Lourdes shrine in Tarbes.

A government statement said that the President's pilgrimage to Lourdes was part of her "purpose-driven life."

'Spiritual rearmament'

"Her past religious visits were characterized as 'spiritual rearmament' that despite the hectic official schedules, the President's bundle of energy, indefatigable nature and focused leadership are attributed to her abiding faith in God," it said.

The President and her party then proceeded to the Spanish capital and were to meet with the Filipino community late yesterday.

Before departing from Manila midnight of Saturday, Ms Arroyo said she was leaving the country after state security forces had thwarted fresh efforts led by renegade soldiers to unseat her on Thursday.

"The situation in the nation is calm and secure. The curfew has been lifted and the people are going about their business as usual. The city, and indeed the entire nation, is functioning normally," Ms Arroyo said.

She vowed that the rebels, who mounted the Oakwood uprising in 2003, would be "punished to the full extent of the law."

Support reiterated

In a statement released here, the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs condemned the "attempted coup d'etat" and expressed "satisfaction that the democratic and constitutional processes have successfully been maintained." It also reiterated support to the Arroyo administration.

Philippine Ambassador to Spain Joseph Delano M. Bernardo told reporters here that the visit of Ms Arroyo, who was also here in June 2006, was a "manifestation of our strong and vibrant ties" with Spain.

"It will also reinforce our efforts in forging relations in key areas such as defense, tourism, renewable energy, infrastructure, agriculture and fisheries, as well as employment opportunities in the health and engineering sectors," Bernardo said.

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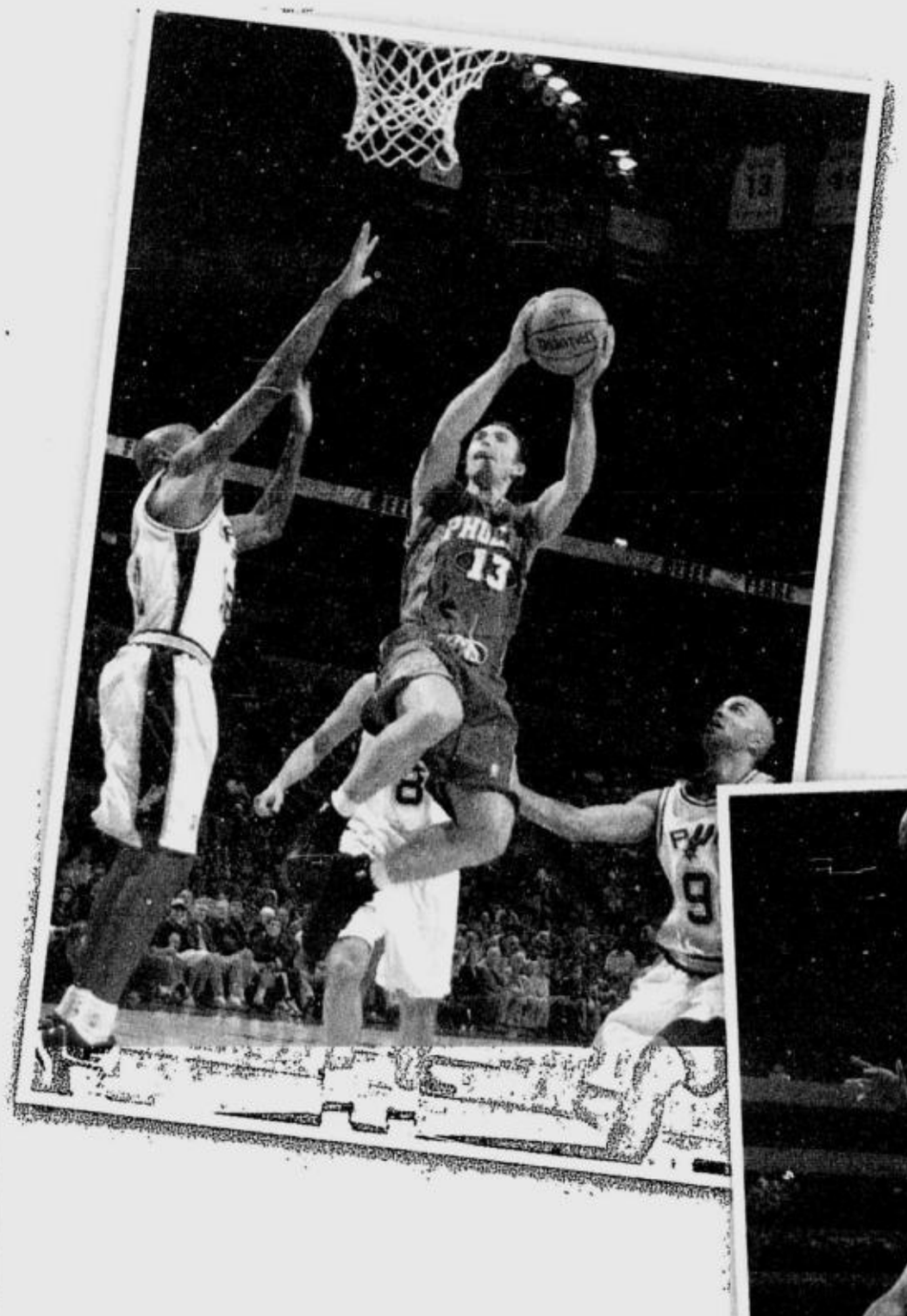

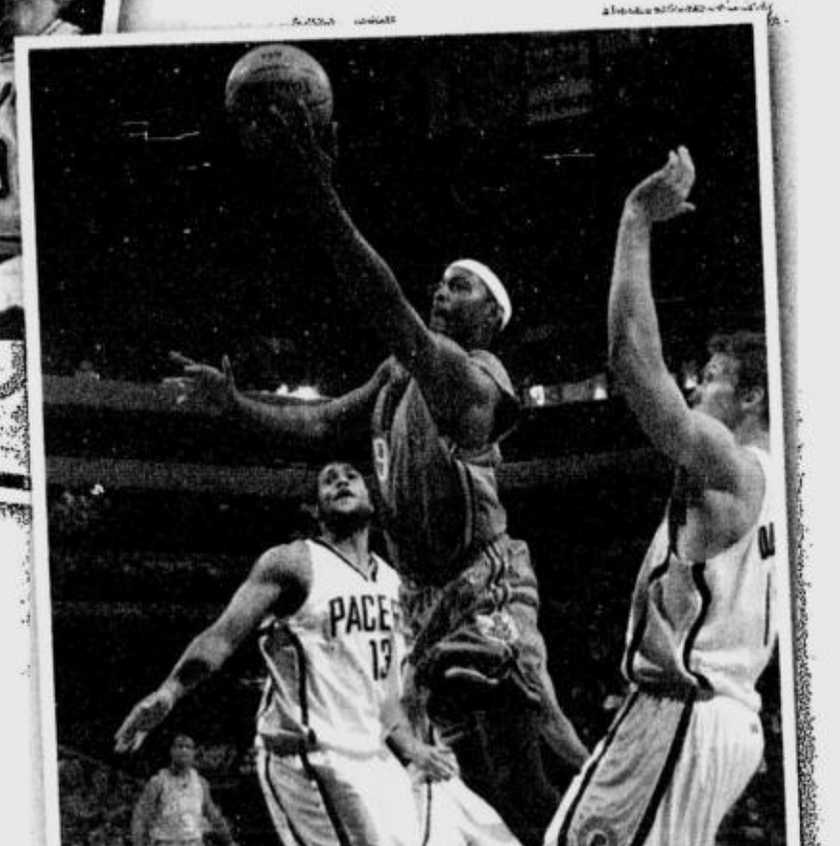

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What Drives You CALTEX

Don't rile media ...

From page A1

tion before being released in the aftermath of Thursday's incident at the Peninsula.

In a nationally televised address on Friday, Ms Arroyo said she was a "believer of press freedom and the rule of law" and expressed regret that the "police procedures had become a problem to the media."

She had earlier met with the Cabinet national security cluster where she gave instructions to be "very circumspect when it comes to the media" and said the government "was not at war with them."

Gonzalez said the police had to arrest everyone at the Peninsula, including journalists, and bring them to their headquarters for verification as it was already late in the night.

CPJ statement

In the latest blast against the Arroyo administration, the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) said in a statement it was "angered" by the police detention of the media persons.

"This sort of mass detention of journalists doing their jobs cannot be justified on the basis of a security and identity check," said Joel Simon, executive director of CPJ, an independent, nonprofit organization that works to safeguard press freedom worldwide.

"It is government interference in news coverage with an obvious intent to intimidate the media," Simon said.

Senate, House probe

Resolutions calling for an investigation of the police handling of the media are to be filed separately today by Sen. Manuel Roxas II and Manila Rep. Bienvenido Abante in their respective chambers.

"The custody of journalists and confiscation of media materials and equipment by police authorities are outstanding issues that have to be threshed out openly, soberly and truthfully," Roxas said.

"Threats to press freedom and public access to official information have been a recurring theme under this administration and it is high time that we confront the question of whether these rights are now being systematically undermined."

"I was told by my sources that a (police) official told the detained journalists that they were both victims and suspects. This is a matter that must be brought out into the open and clarified. Was that officer speaking on behalf of the state or was it just an off-the-cuff, personal remark?" Roxas said.

Counterbalance against abuse

Roxas said that the media had been recognized by the Constitution as a "counterbalance against the institutional abuse of power, through the transparent coverage of events to forestall deception or propaganda."

"We want to prevent a repeat of this conundrum which could become the norm rather than an unlawful and, therefore, dangerous exception," he said.

Abante, head of the House committee on public information, called the Thursday incident as "a pure and simple case of harassment" of the media.

"I thought there was no justification for the arrests, especially because we were not under martial law or a state of national emergency," he said. "They were a violation of the constitutional provision on press freedom."

Barias' wish: Boxing bout with Trillanes

From page A1

that he and Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV were the ones slugging it out.

So engrossed was Barias in the bouts pitting Ray "Boom Boom" Bautista and AJ "Bazooka" Banal against Mexican opponents that he asked this reporter to call him back, saying he was watching the fights.

"*Sana* main event *kami ni Trillanes ... biro lang* (I wish Trillanes and I were the main event ... That's just a joke)," Barias laughed.

"Boom Boom" hammered out a unanimous decision over Antonio "Barrio" Meza, while Banal stopped Soto in nine rounds. *(Story on Page A1.)*

The fights apparently gave Barias a respite from a challenging job since he was appointed chief of the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) in September.

Barely three months into his post, Barias already has had to deal with three high profile cases—the deadly Glorietta 2 mall blast on Oct. 19, the Batasan bombing on Nov. 13, and the failed revolt by Trillanes and Army Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim on Nov. 20.

'Mamang Pulis'

During the Makati siege, Barias tried to negotiate with the rebel soldiers holed up at the Peninsula Manila but was unceremoniously shown out of the hotel by the Magdalo soldiers.

Yesterday, Barias was in high spirits.

"I enjoyed watching the match. Our boxers both won. It was exciting," he said.

Barias said boxing had been his sport since his cadet days at the Philippine Military Academy. He is a member of Class 1975.

Tough cop, gentle cop

He said he also enjoyed playing the role of the more amiable "Mamang Pulis," who deals with the citizenry in a community program launched by the police.

"There are two kinds of policemen, one that is feared by the criminals and the other who is loved by the people," Barias said.

Saturday's launch of the "Mamang Pulis at Mamamayan, Bayanihan para sa Mapayapang Kapaskuhan" gave Barias the chance to shed his tough police image.

The NCRPO program calls for the police to ensure the safety of Christmas shoppers in shopping havens, like Baclaran, Quiapo, Divisoria and Cubao, in department stores, and in other crime-prone areas.

Barias said big signs showing police contact numbers would be placed along main thoroughfares near the Ninoy Aquino International Airport and the Manila Domestic Airport so that passengers, particularly *balikbayan*, would know whom to call when in distress.

"We will be fulfilling our duties as policemen this Christmas," Barias said.

JDV: Revolt no cause for alarm

From page A1

2005, was "calming" some 150 parliamentarians from four continents who had grown anxious over the latest Trillanes tantrum.

The legislators were then attending the conference on HIV/AIDS of the Inter-Parliamentary Union at the bayside Manila Hotel when Trillanes and Lim walked out of their court trial and seized the Peninsula.

"I told them that the incident was a cause of concern, but not of alarm," De Venecia told the INQUIRER yesterday. "I told them that the coup, as in the past, would fizzle out."

De Venecia said many of the parliamentarians were apparently thinking that the siege was taking place in their midst after hearing on CNN or BBC that the incident was "at a Manila hotel."

Making the rounds of small groups gathered during the conference, the Speaker said he told the guests that the public was "tired of people power and other extra-constitutional means to overthrow the government."

He said such a lesson could be drawn from the Peninsula siege, which came four years after Trillanes and the Magdalo soldiers seized another hotel in Makati to demand Ms Arroyo step down.

He said Trillanes' latest caper should prompt the Arroyo administration to implement "genuine reforms so it can recover its high moral ground."

At the height of anti-Arroyo protest actions two years ago, De Venecia and former President Fidel Ramos went to Malacañang to declare their continued support for the President.

The move, captured in photos showing Ms Arroyo and her supporters flashing the thumbs-up, was considered crucial in saving her administration as a result of the "Hello Garci" wiretapping controversy—alleged evidence she stole the 2004 presidential vote.

Moral revolution

De Venecia said he would prefer to talk to Trillanes some time, ostensibly to discuss matters like his campaign for a "moral revolution," his self-styled cure for many of today's problems in the country.

Sen. Francis Escudero said one of the reasons Trillanes took action was "precisely because he was not allowed to act and perform his mandate as a senator."

"I still do not agree with what he did and am not seeking to justify it, just to render justice wherever, whenever, and to whomsoever it is due," Escudero said.

"Allowing him to do so would considerably ease tensions and would be seen as the administration's respect of the law," said Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr.

'Show some humility'

Sen. Jamby Madrigal advised Trillanes, who garnered 11 million votes in the May senatorial elections, to "show some humility" as the Senate looked into his motives for taking over another Makati hotel in four years.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson said he would not have supported Trillanes had Ms Arroyo not used "government resources at her disposal, mostly illegal, to preempt any move by the legislature to impeach her."

"Her sins against the Filipino people easily make Senator Trillanes' Manila Pen caper look like a little child's naughty act trying to catch the attention of an unmindful crowd," said Lacson.

In an interview with dzBB radio, Senate President Manuel Villar said the Senate would hold a caucus today to come up with a stand on Trillanes' actions.

The Senate would also tackle the resolution set to be filed today by Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago seeking to reprimand, suspend or expel Trillanes for leading an attempted coup d'etat.

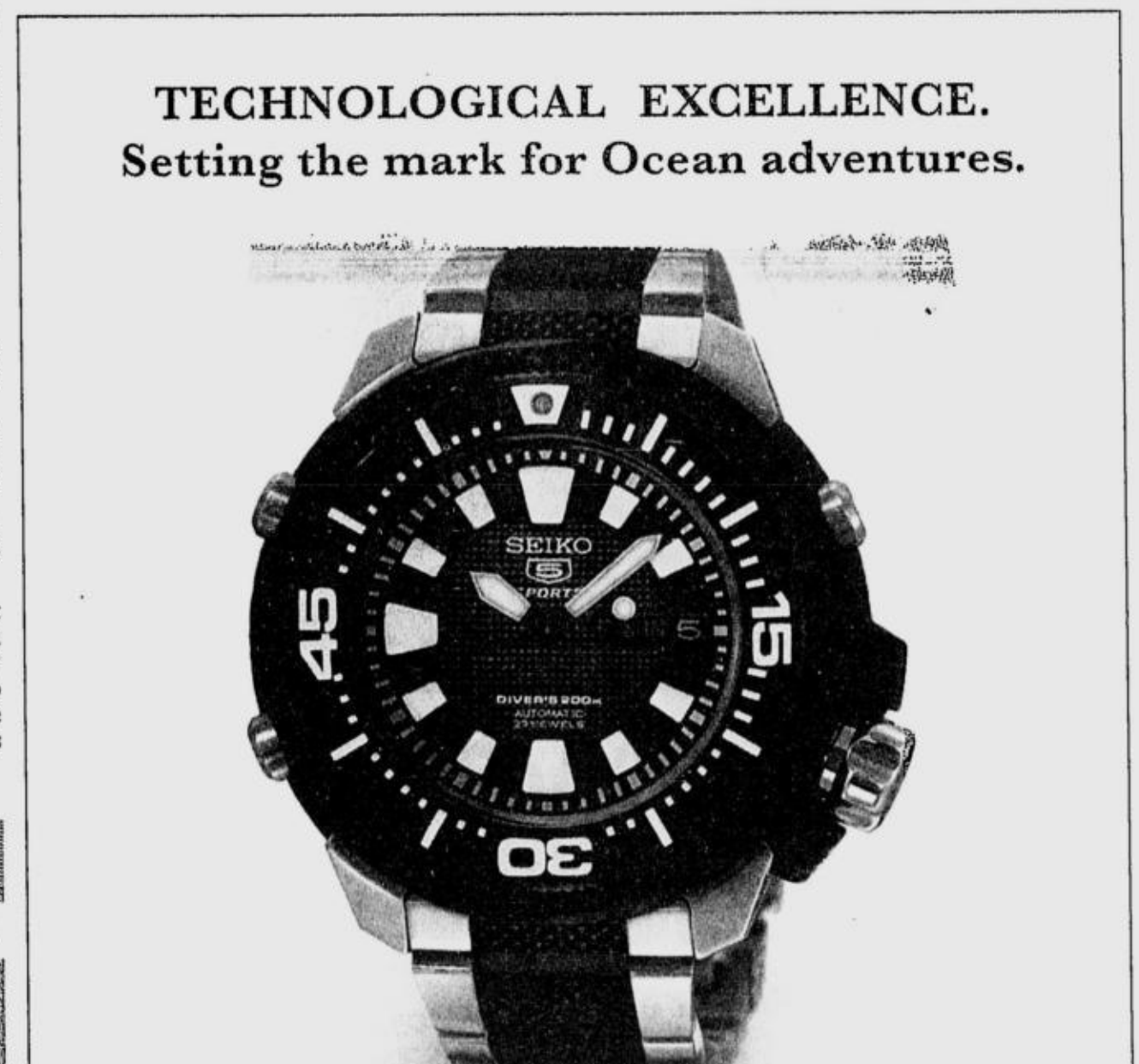
He made a fool of himself

But Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile said the Senate should not waste any more of its time.

"Why do you have to give importance to a person who made a fool of himself?" Enrile said. "He will remain a senator, but he will face the music."

Enrile, one of the leaders of the 1986 coup which led to the Edsa "people power" revolt, belittled Trillanes' action.

"You can't suddenly back out if you want to launch a revolution. Why go there if you don't want your companions to be harmed? In the first place, how can you stage a coup and you go to a hotel? He should have stayed at City Hall and held the judges as hostages," Enrile said.



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IGOROT PAGEANT The start of Yuletide brings out the colors of the Cordillera, courtesy of the Department of Tourism's Wow Philippines campaign. Baguio City's universities brought out their best Cordillera festival dancers dressed up to the holiday mood.
VINCENT CABREZA/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

Manobo folk urge stop to AFP drive

SAN FRANCISCO, AGUSAN DEL SUR—THE DISplaced Manobo villagers may spend their Christmas holidays at the cramped and crowded evacuation center in Surigao del Sur as hostilities between government soldiers and New People's Army (NPA) rebels escalated.

Local and military officials on Saturday afternoon tried to persuade about 1,500 evacuees at the barangay hall of Diatagon in Lianga town to return home with military escorts.

They declined the offer since the military was continuing its offensives in the abandoned villages.

The negotiation came a day after a soldier was killed and 12 others were wounded when patrolling members of the 58th Infantry Battalion led by a certain Second Lieutenant Sison were hit by a landmine believed planted by rebels in Sitio Kaguisokan, a forested area 12 kilometers from the evacuation site.

Maj. Rodrigo Sosmeña, spokesperson of the Eastern Mindanao Command based in Davao City, in a reply to a text message query, said a certain Private First Class Pigaret was killed during the simultaneous explosions of four landmines.

The wounded soldiers were brought to the hospital in Butuan City.

Uncertainty

Sosmeña said about 20 NPA guerrillas briefly fought the soldiers after the explosions.

He said the military wanted the evacuees to return home since the operations were being conducted outside their communities. The presence of residents in the villages may push the rebels farther into the woods, he said.

But the Army spokesperson said it was not yet certain when the military operations would end.

Rev. Modesta Villasanta Jr., chair of human rights group Karapatan-Surigao del Sur, said the displaced "lumad" will not return home until the military operations stop, citing the disappearance of five Manobo villagers during a similar military operation in 2005.

Analyn Lumawag, deputy secretary general of Karapatan-Caraga, said the people declined the offer of the military and local officials for fear of their lives.

They have been living at the evacuation center since Nov. 1. Nongovernment organizations, local governments and the International Committee of the Red Cross have been extending food and medical assistance to them.

Villasanta said the residents refused the offer "since there is really no assurance of safety."

Classes disrupted

Classes in seven "lumad" literacy facilities and high schools were disrupted when soldiers rounded up teachers, students and schoolchildren, and asked them if they were supporters of the NPA, Villasanta said.

Lumawag also said an outbreak of diseases was feared in the evacuation centers. At least 69 children reportedly have fever, cough, sore eyes and diarrhea.

Lumawag said the evacuees were constantly exposed to the weather, with no sufficient food to eat. Five children have been brought to the hospital.

Reynaldo Campos, a teacher of the Alternative Learning Center for Agricultural and Livelihood Development (Alcadev), said most of the "lumad" already wanted to go home.

Campos, who was among the Manobo teachers and families taking shelter at the Diatagon gymnasium, said Lianga Mayor Vicente Pedroso had earlier called for a dialogue among the residents, but this had not stopped the military operations.

Chris Panganiban, with reports from Germelina Lacorte and Jeffrey M. Tupas, Inquirer Mindanao

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Anti-landmine drive by MILF, gov't lauded

KITE FLYING IN BORACAY
Kite surfing is one of the major attractions in Boracay these days as strong winds drive over the big waves.
ARNOLD ALMACEN / INQUIRER VISAYAS

DAVAO CITY—TWO NON-GOVERNMENT organizations engaged in de-mining have lauded the decision of both the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) to jointly undertake clearing operations to remove landmines and unexploded ordnance in Mindanao's once battlefields.

The joint de-mining operation was first proposed by the Philippine Campaign to Ban Landmines (PCBL) in 2001. It earned the nod of both the government and MILF panels during the 14th exploratory talks in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia last month.

"We see this as a measure not only for security and rehabilitation but also for confidence-building on the ground," read a joint statement of lawyer Soliman Santos, PCBL coordinator, and Hansjoerg Eberle, director-general of the Fondation Suisse de Deminage [Swiss Foundation for Mine Action] (FSD), posted on the MILF website.

Today, the world observes the 10th year anniversary of the 1997 Ottawa Treaty which sought the total ban on the use of anti-personnel landmines.

Terms of reference

With the de-mining proposal's acceptance, the joint ceasefire committee is now tasked to draw terms of reference for the said operation.

PCBL and FSD disclosed that preliminary assessment showed the presence of unexploded landmines left on the ground in certain areas in Mindanao, although the threat is seen to be "relatively small or low."

However, the same assessment showed that "there is a bigger problem or higher threat of other unexploded ordnance."

These are usually in the form of fragmentation grenades, mortar rounds, artillery shells and aerial bombs left in the field as a result of armed hostilities over the years, the two organizations noted.

PCBL and FSD explained that these explosive remnants of war (ERW) pose a real threat to life and limb especially for evacuees returning to their homes and farms, and also hinder the establishment of rehabilitation and development projects in their communities.

"And since these munitions of war have come from both sides, it makes sense to involve both sides in the clearing operations for coordination in the field and for exchange of information about the possible location of each side's unexploded ordnance," they stressed.

"In the process, this should help build trust and confidence on the ground, just like at the negotiating table. The recent progress and momentum at the negotiating table should be reinforced by similar progress and momentum on the ground," they further said.

The landmine problem is relatively small but continues to be an important national concern, said a primer prepared by Santos.

He noted that the rebel groups Abu Sayyaf, Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and the communist New People's Army (NPA) continue to employ landmines in warfare.

From 2000 to 2006, the annual Landmine Monitor published by the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), counted 362 casualties in the country from landmines and improvised explosive devices (IEDs). Of these, 299 were soldiers and policemen, and 63 civilians.

No reports

PCBL, the ICBL's Philippine counterpart, noted the absence of reports since 2004 pointing to the use by MILF guerrillas of landmines.

The problem with landmines and unexploded ordnance affects 79 countries and eight non-state areas where there has been war and conflict, according to the ICBL, which was awarded the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize for its work on the Ottawa Treaty.

Santos said the global trend of landmines proliferation exposes the country to the danger of rising transfer into its borders through the international arms-smuggling routes.

Santos added that the primer he put out, which came off the press in November, aims to support efforts at addressing the landmine problem in the country, in compliance with its international commitments and obligations arising from the Ottawa Treaty.

At present, a proposed Philippine Comprehensive Law on Landmines is pending before Congress. House Bill 1054 was filed by Akbayan Rep. Risa Hontiveros-Baraquel. Its Senate version, Senate Bill 1595, was filed by Sen. Gregorio Honasan.

PCBL and FSD expect that the entry of Canada in the peace process also bodes well for enhancing the de-mining effort in Mindanao, pointing to its lead role in pushing for the 1997 Ottawa Treaty.

They also noted that Malaysia, the principal broker of talks between the Philippine government and the MILF, also played a lead role in the treaty regime's Standing Committee on Stockpile Destruction. ***Ryan D. Rosauro, Inquirer Mindanao***

Cold weather chills Benguet, but no frost yet

By Delmar Carino
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BUGUIAS, BENGUET—THE COLD spell that is sweeping the province has forced farmers to scramble for thicker clothes and revive the morning habit of sunbathing.

Farmers here and in Kibungan and Atok towns said they felt the drop in temperature starting Dec. 1, forcing them to brew coffee earlier than usual.

Rudy de Guzman, a farmer from Barangay Madaymen in Kibungan, said he had to go out on Saturday still wearing his blanket to catch the sun's rays warming over his carrot farm.

"*Pirmi, mantulinek* (It's too much. It's too cold)," he told the INQUIRER.

Many shared De Guzman's woes.

The cold breeze was just too much also for farmers from the villages of Paoay, Cattubo and Sayangan in Atok town, and in the villages of Sinipsip, Natubleng and Abatan here.

The wind blowing at Km. 54 in Atok town, where the highest point of the country's highway system is located (7,400 feet above sea level), is enough to cause windburn.

Farmers who attended a symposium on water districts at the Benguet State University (BSU) Loo campus here on Saturday had to excuse themselves from their seats more often to stay under the sun.

Edgardo Demayo, Luzon water district development division manager of the Local Water Utilities Administration (LWUA), was surprised with the unusual coldness.

Drivers of passenger vans plying through Halsema Highway, the province's main link to Baguio City, said people were lining up the road from 6 to 8 a.m. just to warm themselves.

Local officials said vegetable farms are safe from frost, locally known as "*andap*," for now.

But they said small and isolated incidents of frost were already reported.

Kibungan Mayor Benito Siadto said he saw some patches of frost in Madaymen.

Atok Mayor Concepcion Balao and Mayor Felicio Bayacsan of this town also said some farmers have informed them of "a little frost" through text messages.

"As long as it is windy, no massive frost will happen," Bayacsan said.

Salvador Olinares, a weather specialist of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration in Baguio City, said the coming of the northeast monsoon, locally known as "*hanging amihan*," caused the nippy weather.

He said the temperature dropped to 11.6 degrees Celsius on Nov. 30, 10.4 degrees Celsius on Dec. 1 and 11.8 degrees Celsius on Dec. 2.

"It is expected that the cold front would last until February next year," he said.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT WEEK (SDW) 2007

Kasali Ka, Sumali Ka!

Social Development Week (SDW) is an annual event hosted by the Caucus of Development NGO Networks (CODE-NGO) in partnership with the Peace and Equity Foundation, Inc. (PEF). It aims to further build the efforts of its member networks and partner institutions, as well as to increase awareness and involvement in social development work through capacity-building, livelihood promotion and community organizing among the underprivileged sectors of our society. SDW is also geared toward fostering a stronger partnership among non-government organizations (NGOs), peoples' organizations (POs), government, and the private sector.

The 2007 SDW program offers an informative line-up of activities and fora. Aptly themed "Kasali Ka, Sumali Ka!", we extend the invitation to every Filipino to make a difference by taking part in this 4-day experience. Together, let us bring our country closer to a more promising future.

SDW 2007 PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES

Opening Program
December 3, 5 pm
Glorietta Activity Center, Makati City
** Everyone is invited*

Social Development Week 2007 opens with inspirational messages from leaders of the NGO community, and formal opening of the Development Trade Fair, Photo Gallery, and Exhibit of the National Poverty Map Contests Finalists. Entertainment will be provided by guest performers.

Development Trade Fair
December 3 - 6
Glorietta Activity Center, Makati City
** Everyone is invited*

Products and services from various communities and partner organizations are featured in the Development Trade Fair. Shop at the trade fair for quality products at very reasonable prices and support efforts at generating sustainable livelihoods for our communities.

Photo Exhibit
December 3 - 6
Glorietta Activity Center, Makati City
** Everyone is invited*

The Photo Gallery features the social development work being done by CODE-NGO and its member networks. It also features an exhibit of the finalists in PEF's National Poverty Map Photo Essay and Creative Writing Contests "Mga Kulay ng Kahirapan, Hamon ng Kinabukasan".

Product Demonstration
December 4 & 5, every 11:30 am & 5:30 pm
Glorietta Activity Center, Makati City
** Everyone is invited*
See creative community workers produce indigenous arts and crafts. Listen, learn and try your hand at what they do!

* Clay Molding by Munyikang Putik
* Backstrap Weaving by CORDNET
* Butterfly Framing & Crafting by Isla de Bila-Bila

Forum on the National Poverty Map & Regional Anti-Poverty Partnerships
December 4, 1 – 5 pm
Innotech, Commonwealth Avenue,
Diliman, Quezon City

The National Poverty Map is a tool to encourage development discussions and pinpoint partnerships in implementing poverty reduction programs. The updated edition of the map presents new and intriguing poverty indicators, and the degree of accomplishment of the Philippines vis-a-vis the Millennium Development Goals. *Regional Anti-Poverty Partnerships* were crafted from a series of national and regional consultations among all CODE-NGO networks and other civil society networks and sectors in some of the poorest regions of the country. The forum endeavors to refine results and generate added interest and support for these anti-poverty partnerships.

The Awarding Ceremony of "Mga Kulay ng Kahirapan, Hamon ng Kinabukasan": The National Poverty Map Creative Writing & Photo Essay Contests will also be held immediately after the launching.

Open to the public, pre-registration is required.
Please contact Mr. Roy Cabonegro
Email: rcabonegro2001@yahoo.com
Cell: (0916) 475 5004
Tel: (02) 926-8131, 920-2595, 435-6616

PEF Partners Convergence: Making Localization Work!
December 5, 10 am – 3 pm
New Horizon Hotel, Boni Avenue corner EDSA,
Mandaluyong City
** By invitation only*

The PEF's localization strategy seeks to pursue the overarching goals of poverty reduction, development effectiveness, program efficiency and stakeholder empowerment. The conference is venue for the partners of PEF to present and sharpen their localization strategies. In particular, the localization strategy for the provinces of Saranganl and Sorsogon will be presented.

CODE-NGO & GZO-PI Forum: CSO Response on Extra-Judicial Killings and the Human Security Act
December 5, 1 – 5 pm
Environmental Studies Institute, Miriam College,
Katipunan Avenue, Loyola Heights, Quezon City

In preparation for the Human Rights Day commemoration on December 10, this forum will provide CSO leaders an update on developments related to the extra-judicial killings and the Human Security Act (HSA). The forum will also identify actions for CSOs at the national and local levels and get expressions of interest/commitment for these actions.

Open to the public, pre-registration is required.
Please contact Ms. Roselle Rasay or
Ms. Johanna de los Reyes
Email: rrasay@codengo.org,
jhodelosreyes@yahoo.com
Tel: (02) 926-8131, 920-2595, 435-6616

CODE-NGO 11th National Assembly
December 6, 8:30 am – 5 pm
Best Western Astor Hotel, Makati Avenue,
Makati City
** By invitation only*

CODE-NGO convenes its member networks to present its accomplishments, ratify various resolutions, and present strategic plans that will shape the future of the network.

Closing Program
December 6, 5 pm
Glorietta Activity Center, Makati City
** Everyone is invited*

Social Development Week 2007 is a project of

CODE-NGO
CAUCUS OF DEVELOPMENT NGO NETWORKS
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Loyola Heights, Quezon City
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Website: www.pef.ph

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Room 1102, 11/F Aurora Tower,
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Website: www.afonline.org

THE CODE-NGO MEMBER NETWORKS

- Association of Foundations (AF)
- Central Visayas Network of NGOs (CENVISNET)
- Coalition for Bicol Development (CBD)
- Cordillera Network of Development NGOs and POs (CORDNET)
- Eastern Visayas Network of NGOs and POs (EVNET)
- Mindanao Coalition of Development NGO Networks (MINCODE)
- National Confederation of Cooperatives (NATCCO)
- National Council of Social Development Foundation of the Philippines, Inc. (NCSD)
- Partnership of Philippine Support Service Agencies, Inc. (PHILSSA)
- Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP)
- Philippine Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Areas (PhilDHRRA)
- Western Visayas Network of Social Development NGOs (WEVNET)

The 2007 PEF National Poverty Map Creative Writing and Photo Essay Contests are in partnership with Asia United Bank, RCBC and ING.

Asia United Bank · RCBC · ING Investment Management

Cave explorer killed, 5 others rescued in Cebu

By Jolene Bulambot
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—A CAVE EXPLORER died while five others, including a foreigner, were rescued about 20 hours after they were trapped inside the cave in Barangay Gaas, Balamban town, 63 kilometers west of here.

The spelunkers went inside the cave shortly before 9 a.m. on Friday for a three-day mapping and exploration of the still unnamed cave in Barangay Gaas, 10 km from the town proper.

One of them, Dr. Adolf Espina, fell at around 6 p.m. as his equipment malfunctioned, according to Merks Certifico, one of the explorers.

The five-member team, all members of the National Speleological Association of the Philippines, and their American guest, was trying to determine if it was the deepest vertical cave in the Philippines, Certifico said.

Each member carried a 400-meter rope and they were down to 81 meters when the accident happened, he said.

Espina, 36, an ophthalmologist who had been into spelunking for more than 10 years, fell 56 meters onto a ledge, 137 meters from the mouth of the cave.

Rescue

Rescuers found the body of Espina, who was also a spelunking trainer, shortly before 6 a.m. on Saturday.

Right after the accident, Certifico, a Manila-based caver, decided to climb out to get help from villagers. The cave's mouth is about 500 meters from the national road.

Barangay officials immediately alerted town officials who, together with officials of Cebu City, organized a rescue team of personnel from the Cebu City Fire Protection Office and volunteer mountaineers and spelunkers.

The rescuers went inside the cave at around 11 p.m. on Friday. The first to be brought out shortly before 7 a.m. on Dec. 1 was Charles Festersen, an American who has been in the Philippines since last year, exploring various caves in the country.

Festersen, who was in shock, declined to talk to reporters waiting at the entrance.

The other rescued cavers were identified as Jolina Asis, Dondon Dimpas, and Kublain Espina, a distant relative of Adolf Espina.

Deepest cave

Certifico said the spelunkers decided to explore the cave because it could be the deepest cave in the Philippines and not the 161-meter Sagada cave in Mountain Province.

Certifico said he, rig team member Dimpas and Kublain, the team leader, were the first to descend, followed by Adolf's team, composed of Asis, a schoolteacher, and Festersen.

He said his group was already down on the first ledge, 81 meters from the mouth, when Adolf's karabiner, a descending device attached to his rope, malfunctioned.

Certifico said he heard Espina shout and when he looked up, he saw Espina falling down to the ledge below him.

"When I heard him fall, I decided to ascend to ask for help. In my assessment, it was really a bad situation. Charles followed me while Jolina and the others stayed with doc. I couldn't tell if he was unconscious because I have to ascend," Certifico told reporters past 11 p.m. on Friday.

No permit

Rescuers had difficulty extracting Espina's body because only a two-meter vertical opening led to the ledge, which measures five meters wide.

The rescuers reached him shortly after 5 a.m., but he was already dead.

He broke various bones in the body, his arms and knees, according to SFO Bernardo del Mar of the Mabolo (Cebu City) Fire Unit, who took part in the rescue operation.

Espina's body was immediately brought back to the city, together with his spelunking companions.

Balamban Mayor Alex Binghay said town officials would investigate the incident since the cave mapping was done without the knowledge of the municipal government and of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

HOPES FOR CHRISTMAS JEOFFREY MAITEM/INQUIRER MINDANAO

Lanterns sprout along Davao City streets, but vendors say their sales are still low because of the tight budget of buyers.

Driver gets 3 life terms for rice theft

By Felipe V. Celino
Inquirer Visayas

ROXAS CITY—FOR STEALING some 800 sacks of palay over two months in 2004, a truck driver was sentenced to three life terms.

The court said William Bargo, who was found guilty of four counts of qualified theft, would suffer 16 more years in jail.

Bargo, 37, could only be qualified to seek parole after serving 40 years in prison, it said.

Capiz Regional Trial Court (RTC) Judge Charlito Fantilanan of Branch 18, in a decision promulgated on Nov. 29, found Bargo guilty beyond reasonable doubt of qualified theft penalized by Article 310 of the Revised Penal Code.

He also ordered Bargo to indemnify the offended party, Vicenta Arsenal, of over P500,000, representing the value of the palay she lost.

Arsenal filed the case against Bargo after she found on July 7, 2004 that the sacks of palay she stored at RAA Rice Mill and Warehouse in Barangay Milibili, this city, were brought out by Bargo and sold without her consent.

She said the theft happened four times—March 16, 2004, when she lost 362 sacks of palay worth P180,480; April 16, when she lost 205 sacks worth P98,400; May 18, 2004, involving 40 sacks valued at P19,200; and May 22, 2005, when she lost 232 sacks worth P112,320.

Arsenal, a rice trader from Tabuc Sur, Panitan, Capiz, also discovered that the accused sold 136 sacks of her old rice stock valued at P118,170 and 94 sacks of rice bran that cost P26,320.

Bargo, a resident of Barangay Tabuc and driver of the truck owned by Arsenal, denied that he stole the rice stock of his employer.

RAA Rice Mill and Warehouse operator Juancito Francisco, however, testified that their milling record showed that Bargo had instructed them to mill the sacks of palay purportedly on Arsenal's order and brought out the milled rice in Arsenal's truck.

2 Misamis prisoners die, 10 others hospitalized after taking concoction

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—TWO INMATES of the Misamis Oriental provincial jail died while 10 others were hospitalized after drinking a fatal concoction inside prison on Wednesday.

Warden Dominador Tagarda said the inmates decided to make an alcoholic mix of thinner, soft drink, toothpaste and coffee which they shared in a drinking session.

After a few hours, all inmates who drank the concoction complained of severe stomach pain and were brought to the Northern Mindanao Medical Center.

Two of them, Rico Modelo and Allan Purisima, died the next day.

Hospital doctors said the chemicals in the mixture were not fit for consumption.

In a radio interview, Tagarda admitted to lapses in guarding the inmates. Drinking sessions are not allowed in the jail premises, he said.

"It is also very difficult for us to inspect every prisoner all the time. We have only six guards doing the rounds. We also have to inspect the visitors to make sure no prohibited items are smuggled inside," said Tagarda.

Gov. Oscar Moreno has ordered an investigation and called on the provincial jail personnel to be more vigilant in doing their duties.
Ma. Cecilia L. Rodriguez, Inquirer Mindanao

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Newly healed lives for survivors of 'Reming'

By Ephraim Aguilar
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LEGAZPI CITY—TO THE REFUGEES IN transit shelters at the Taysan resettlement village here, the flowers abloom around them showcase yet another facet of their new lives after Supertyphoon "Reming" struck on Nov. 30 last year.

The refugees, whose next of kin were among the dead and missing, can again afford to smell the roses a year since hurdling the dreary and ash-covered landscape in the villages of Albay after that mournful day.

The date marked one of the worst disasters to ever strike the province. Lahar from Mayon volcano buried thousands of people and homes.

Youths would meet up in groups to sing and play the guitar. Some played basketball. Mothers gathered to enjoy conversations during afternoon siesta. Others grow vegetables in small patches of land next to their houses.

The Taysan resettlement site cradles more than 300 displaced villagers from the lahar zones in Barangay Padang, one of the worst-hit in the city.

The "*bayanihan*" system can be observed as the refugees build houses where they will settle before Christmas.

Others were busy dismantling their old shanties which they had occupied for more than 10 months after being displaced.

Women are busy tending the *sari-sari* stores that thrive in the community. Some families set up stores in front of their newly built homes.

Some refugees sell charcoal and root crops at the site for a living.

Right after the typhoon, tension was palpable as people were starting all over again, much like chickens scratching for whatever grains they could scoop from a barren and deserted land.

The villagers were then fixing the shanties and tents that had served as temporary shelters, queuing for food rations and goods from relief agencies, painfully retelling the tragedy each time journalists visited them for interviews.

It is a different story today with the refugees living new lives.

Alone

Getting up was the most difficult thing for Anna Añonuevo, whose house was swept by lahar flows at the height of the super howler.

Floodwaters from gullies of the volcano washed away her parents and three siblings. Their bodies were never recovered.

Añonuevo, 23, the youngest in the family, was the sole survivor.

She finished college in March with a degree in education.

"My parents were not there to see me receive my diploma on stage. But I knew they were happy," she said.

She said it was her father's dream for her to become a teacher and she was determined to pursue it in return for her parents' sacrifices.

Helping hand

A noontime variety show chose Añonuevo to be one of its beneficiaries and she was given cash gifts for her to start all over again.

She was able to buy new clothes and pay for the medication of her injuries.

In the hardest time of her life, her best friend's family welcomed her to their house. She has been staying there for 11 months. It was where she spent her first Christmas without her family.

Rose Valladolid, 21, said taking Añonuevo to her home was like having a sister since she was an only child.

"Ana has been a very good friend who has helped me a lot, too. My parents know her and we all decided to help her. The tragedy made our friendship deeper and stronger," Rose said.

Now, Ana is busy overseeing the construction of her house awarded to her through the core-shelter assistance project of the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

A new chapter

Trauma counseling and stress debriefing sessions conducted by missionary volunteers were a big help for Ramon Balderama, 29, so he could heal emotionally.

Balderama tried to save his wife, his 4-year-old daughter, and 2-year-old son from the raging lahar but failed.

"I was mad at God for a while for allowing my wife and my children to perish in the tragedy and letting me live without them," Balderama said. "But later I understood and accepted that it was all part of God's test."

Balderama found comfort from a friend he met at the resettlement site. That friend later became his wife.

Despite criticisms, they got married at the Taysan village chapel on Feb. 28.

His wife Lita, 24, lost her mother, two sisters, and two nephews.

"It was the reason I easily empathized with (my husband's) situation. We both lost our loved ones and we were there to care for each other after the tragedy," Lita said.

Balderama said he would never forget his wife and children who died, and that he still missed them a lot.

But, he said, he felt blessed that he now expected a new baby. Lita is 6 months pregnant.

"People may not understand our decision [to get married], but this is probably God's way of giving us a new life after the tragedy that hurt us deeply," Lita said in Filipino.

Youngest survivor

Not many people might know it, but Mercy Arquero's child could be the youngest yet undocumented survivor from the lahar in Padang.

Her fifth daughter was in her womb when she was swept off by lahar. She was then 4 months pregnant.

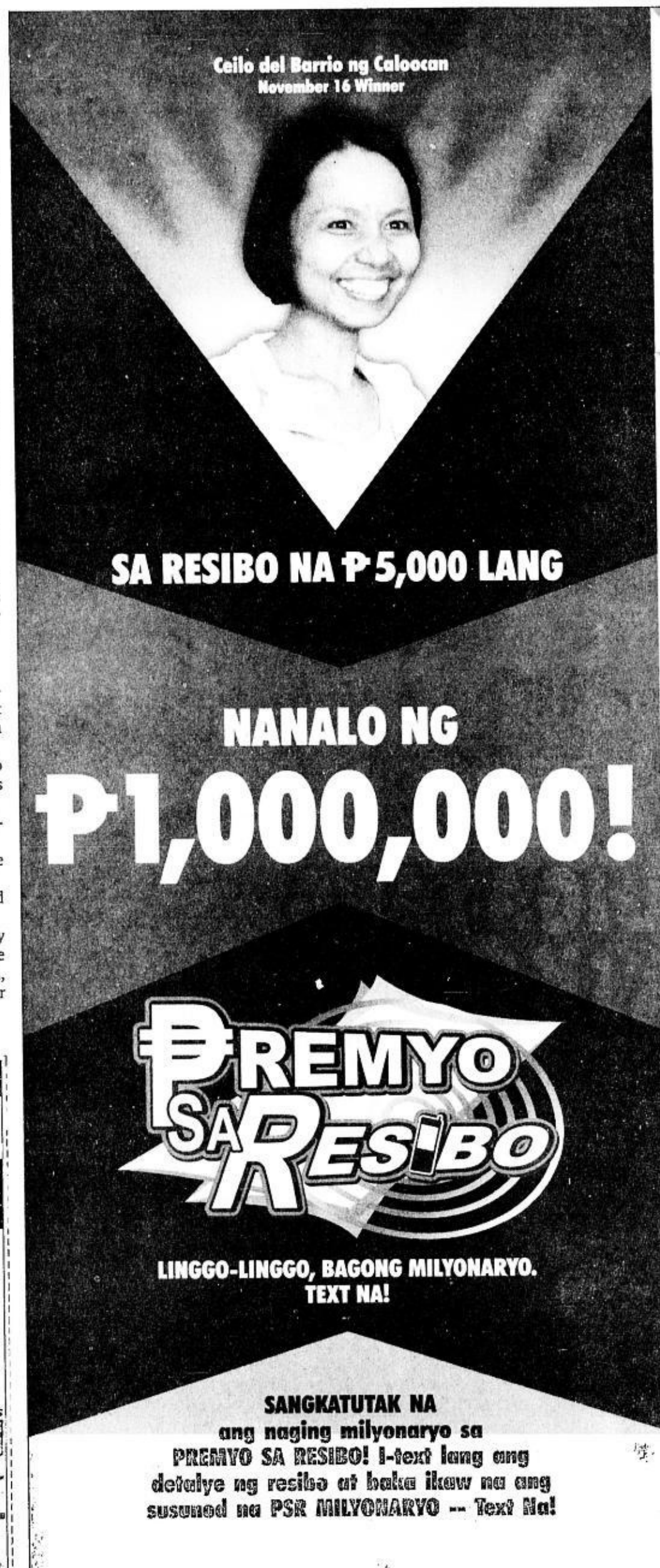
She lost her year-old baby, two other children in the flood.

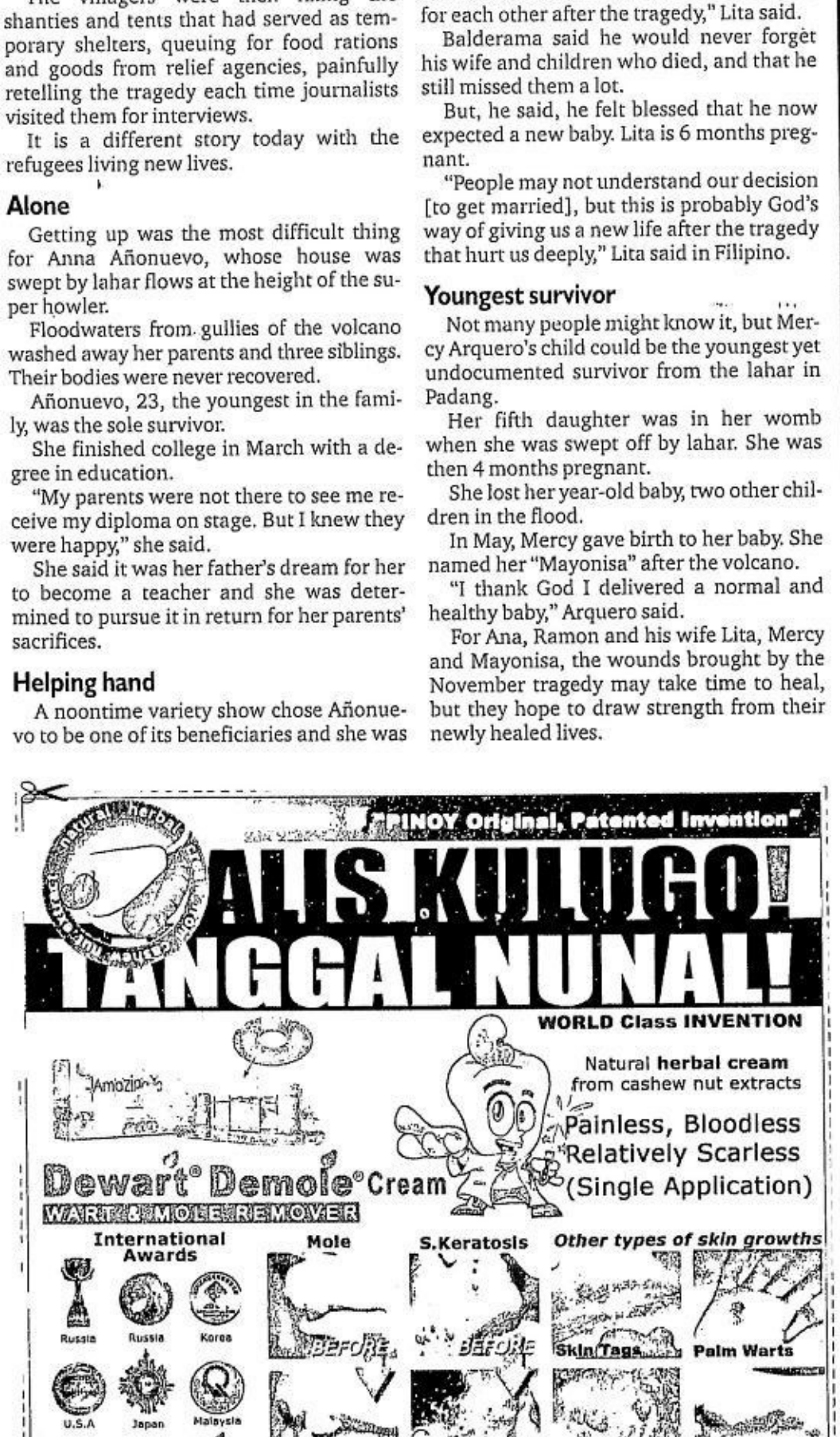
In May, Mercy gave birth to her baby. She named her "Mayonisa" after the volcano.

"I thank God I delivered a normal and healthy baby," Arquero said.

For Ana, Ramon and his wife Lita, Mercy and Mayonisa, the wounds brought by the November tragedy may take time to heal, but they hope to draw strength from their newly healed lives.

PARISHIONERS, local government officials and typhoon survivors lit candles at the Our Lady of Assumption Church in Guinobatan, Albay to commemorate the first year anniversary of Supertyphoon "Reming," which claimed the lives of more than a thousand Albayanos. NINO JESUS ORBETA/INQUIRER SOUTHERN LUZON



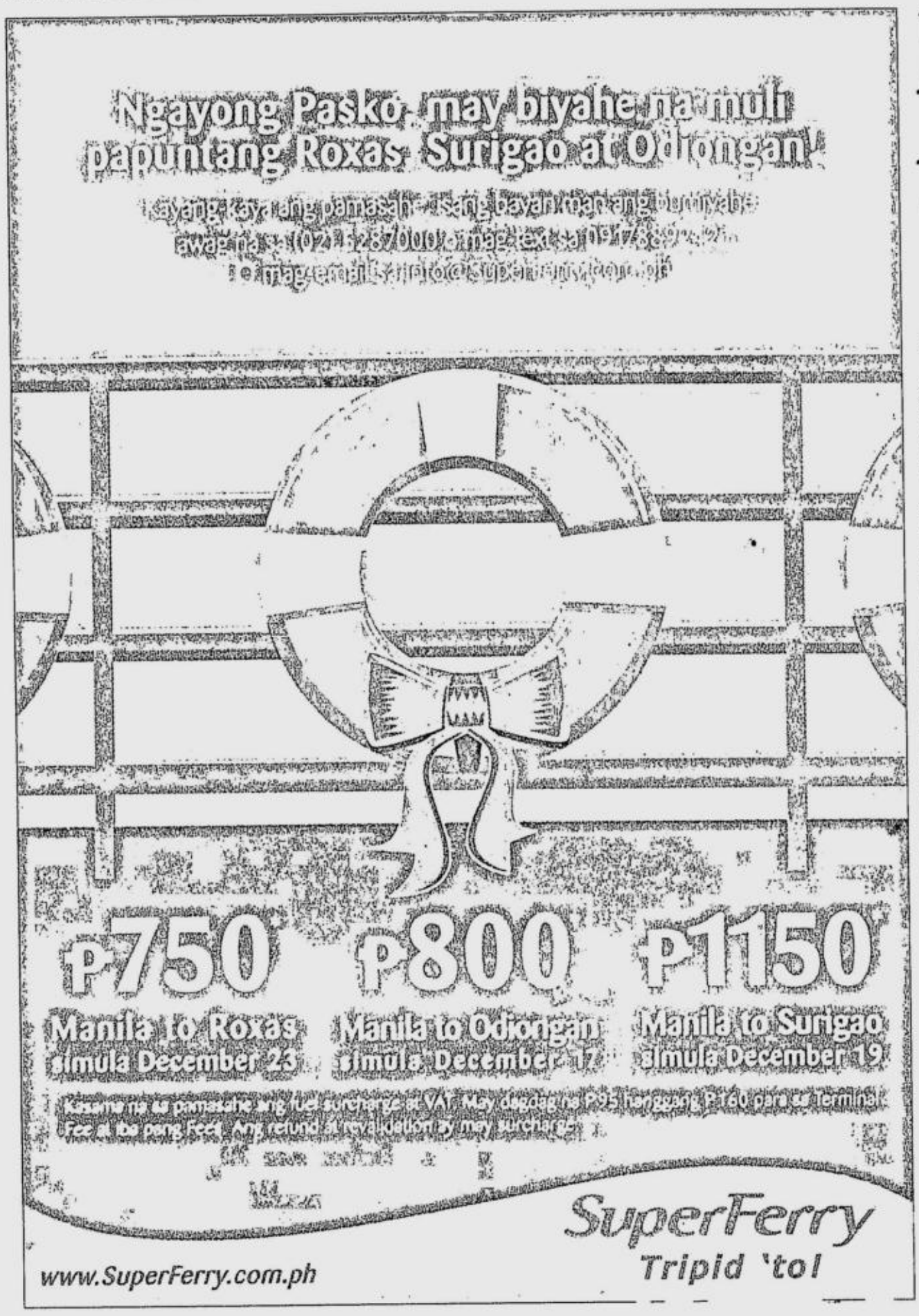


Delariarte ties for 11th in Cambodian Open

SIEM REAP, CAMBODIA—JEROME DELARIARTE CLOSED OUT WITH another two-under-par 70 Sunday to secure a rare tie for 11th place at 282 in the inaugural $300,000 Johnnie Walker Cambodian Open won by American Bryan Saltus with 67-271. Mars Pucay carded a 73 and finished tied for 38th at 288 while Gerald Rosales submitted a 72 for 291. *Asian Tour News*

SPORTS

More Sports, including SEA Games, on A29-A32



Magnolia rally turns back TNT

GAMES WEDNESDAY (Araneta Coliseum)
4:50 p.m.—Coca-Cola vs Red Bull
7:20 p.m.—Alaska vs Sta. Lucia Realty

By June Navarro

ANTIPOLO CITY—LORDY TUGADE nailed a three-pointer at the buzzer to lift Magnolia to a 96-93 squeaker over Talk 'N Text last night in the Smart-PBA Philippine Cup at the Ynares Center here.

Popping out from a screen provided by Danny Ildefonso, Tugade received the inbound from Dondon Hontiveros and heaved the game-winner from the corner that swished the net just in time to complete a Magnolia comeback from as many as 24 points down.

"Great players stand out in tough situations like that if needed," said Magnolia coach Siot Tanquingcen, who also heaped praises on playmaker LA Tenorio and Hontiveros.

The Beverage Masters, coming off a convincing rout of the league-leading Purefoods TJ Giants, avoided getting routed this time as Hontiveros unload all of his 26 points in the second half to anchor an inspired rally that led them to a seventh win in 10 outings.

The Phone Pals, playing for the first time since trading Asi Taulava to Coca-Cola, absorbed their third straight setback and lost for sixth time in 11 games.

Air21 cashed in on the absence of Jay-R Reyes and two late Welcoat errors to squeeze out an 88-80 win in the first game.

Ranidel De Ocampo's 15-footer with 26 ticks left following a turnover by Welcoat rookie Joe De Vance allowed the Express to chalk up a fifth win in 10 games.

The 6-foot-7 Reyes is out for at least two weeks following an medial cruciate ligament strain on his left knee he suffered in Welcoat's 94-87 loss to Barangay Ginebra last week.

The Dragons fell to 3-8.

The Phone Pals were leading three-fourths of the way before Magnolia launched a rally aided by coach Derrick Pumaren's decision to rest his starters halfway into the final period.

By the time Pumaren had his top guns back on the floor together, the Beverage Masters had already overtaken the Phone Pals, 84-82, on a Tugade layup.

The last time a team battled back from a 24-point hole to win a game was when Alaska defeated Coca-Cola, 95-94, in Game 1 of the 2006 Philippine Cup quarterfinals.

The scores:

First Game

AIR21 88—Santos 29, De Ocampo 15, Arboleda 14, Intal 12, Se 9, Chia 5, Cruz 2, Canaleta 2, Kramer 0, Baluyot 0, Sotto 0.

WELCOAT 80—Arana 17, Ibañes 12, De Vance 11, Belasco 11, Lopez 10, Gelig 8, Sta. Maria 8, Dufay 3, Ballesteros 0, Mente 0.

Quarters: 11-23, 37-43, 60-64, 88-80

Second Game

MAGNOLIA 96—Hontiveros 26, Tugade 19, Seigle 11, Ildefonso 11, E. Villanueva 10, Tenorio 7, Eman 4, Racela 3, Wilson 2, Calaguio 2, Gonzales 1, J. Villanueva 0.

TALK 'N TEXT 93—Ritualo 19, Washington 16, De Ocampo 13, Cardona 12, Alapag 10, Peek 8, Carey 7, Allado 6, Belano 2, Aljamal 0.

Quarters: 17-28, 29-53, 59-73, 96-93

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MONDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2007

ERTS

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Magnolia rally turns back TNT

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By June Navarro

ANTIPOLO CITY—LORDY TUGADE nailed a three-pointer at the buzzer to lift Magnolia to a 96-93 squeaker over Talk 'N Text last night in the Smart-PBA Philippine Cup at the Ynares Center here.

Popping out from a screen provided by Danny Ildefonso, Tugade received the inbound from Dondon Hontiveros and heaved the game-winner from the corner that swished the net just in time to complete a Magnolia comeback from as many as 24 points down.

"Great players stand out in tough situations like that if needed," said Magnolia coach Siot Tanquingcen, who also heaped praises on playmaker LA Tenorio and Hontiveros.

The Beverage Masters, coming off a convincing rout of the league-leading Purefoods TJ Giants, avoided getting routed this time as Hontiveros unload all of his 26 points in the second half to anchor an inspired rally that led them to a seventh win in 10 outings.

The Phone Pals, playing for the first time since trading Asi Taulava to Coca-Cola, absorbed their third straight setback and lost for sixth time in 11 games.

Air21 cashed in on the absence of Jay-R Reyes and two late Welcoat errors to squeeze out an 88-80 win in the first game.

Ranidel De Ocampo's 15-footer with 26 ticks left following a turnover by Welcoat rookie Joe De Vance allowed the Expres[illegible] chalk up a fifth win in 10 games.

The 6-foot-7 Reyes is out for at least two weeks following an medial cruciate ligamen strain on his left knee he suffered in Welcoat's 94-87 loss to Barangay Ginebra last week.

The Dragons fell to 3-8.

The Phone Pals were leading three-fourth of the way before Magnolia launched a rally aided by coach Derrick Pumaren's decision to rest his starters halfway into the final period.

By the time Pumaren had his top guns back on the floor together, the Beverage Masters had already overtaken the Phone Pals 84-82 on a Tugade layup.

The last time a team battled back from a 24-point hole to win a game was when Alaska defeated Coca-Cola, 95-94, in Game 1 of the 2006 Philippine Cup quarterfinals.

The scores

First Game

AIR21 88—Santos [illegible] 5, Art[illegible]e 9, Chua 5, Cruz[illegible] Canaleta 2, Kramer 3, Balu[illegible]

WELCOAT 80—Arana 17, Ibañes 2, De Vance [illegible], Bel[illegible] [illegible]ig 8, Sta. Maria 8, Dulay [illegible], Ballesteros [illegible], Mente[illegible]

Quarters: 11-23, 37-43, 60-64, 88-80

Second Game

MAGNOLIA 96—Hontiveros [illegible]ugade [illegible], Ildefonso [illegible], E[illegible] Villanueva 10, Teno[illegible] Eman 4, Racela [illegible], Calaguio [illegible], Gonzales [illegible], Villanueva [illegible]

TALK 'N TEXT 93—Rituald 19, Washington 16, [illegible]ardona 12, Alapag 10, Peek 8, Cam[illegible] Allado 6, Rela[illegible], Aljamal[illegible]

Quarters: 1[illegible] [illegible]-9

RETAKE OF PRECEDING FRAME

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Dogfight arena in Rizal raided

By Kristine L. Alave

THE POLICE RAIDED ON SATURDAY NIGHT a compound in Tanay, Rizal where a dogfight was being held and arrested 69 bettors.

Members of the Region IV-A Special Operations Group also rescued 16 wounded pit bulls and turned them over to the Rizal police for temporary safekeeping.

Chief Supt. Norberto Padilla, Police Regional Office IV-A director, said the raid took place at around 6:30 p.m. in Manrose Farm, Barangay Sampaloc, Rizal province.

According to a report by RSOG head Chief Insp. Jess Kabigting, the operatives, led by Senior Insp. Edward Mallo, swooped down on the compound after getting a tip from an informant.

Kabigting said they arrested the 69 bettors in the middle of a game.

"There was an ongoing dogfight," he said, adding that some of the dogs they rescued had injuries.

Kabigting said they are investigating the owner of the farm and the illegal dogfight club. He added that they are verifying some of the leads which they had received.

The arrested persons may be charged for violating the Animal Welfare Act and illegal gambling, the police officer added.

An animal rights group, meanwhile, welcomed the police operation in Rizal province where another dogfight club was discovered and raided last March.

"It's wonderful, it's good news," Philippine Animal Welfare Society president Nita Lichauco said. The group is considering filing criminal charges against the suspects in the Tanay raid.

Navotas warns drunk drivers

By Jeannette I. Andrade

NAVOTAS MAYOR TOBY TIANGCO HAS ordered the police and barangay officials to keep drunk drivers off the city streets for the protection of residents, especially during the holidays.

In particular, Tiangco directed the Navotas City Police, the city's Public Order and Safety Office and all village officials to strictly enforce Ordinance 2004-13 or the Navotas Traffic Code, especially its provisions prohibiting drunk driving.

"We intend to stop drunk driving to ensure public safety, especially this Christmas season. It's a season for parties but if people want to drink liquor, we encourage them to drink responsibly and always have a designated driver who will stay sober," Tiangco said in a statement.

Police officers and Poso traffic enforcers will be fielded in the vicinity of entertainment establishments, offices and other places where Christmas parties are expected to be held at night time.

DID YOU KNOW

ON DEC. 3, 1985, Corazon Aquino, widow of former opposition Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr., declared that she would run against then President Ferdinand Marcos in the February 1986 snap election.

The opposition party officially proclaimed Aquino as its presidential candidate on Dec. 15 during a large rally at Liwasang Bonifacio.

Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research

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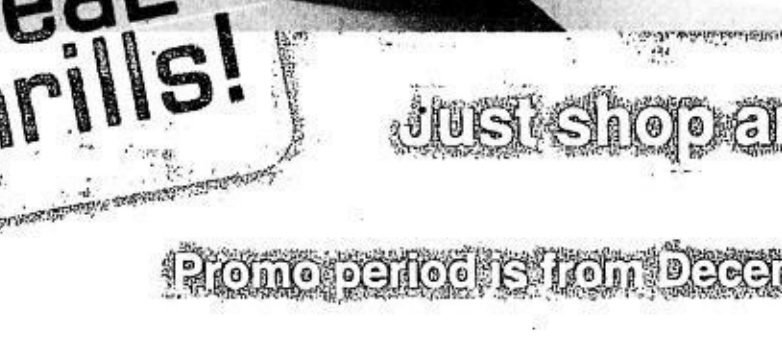

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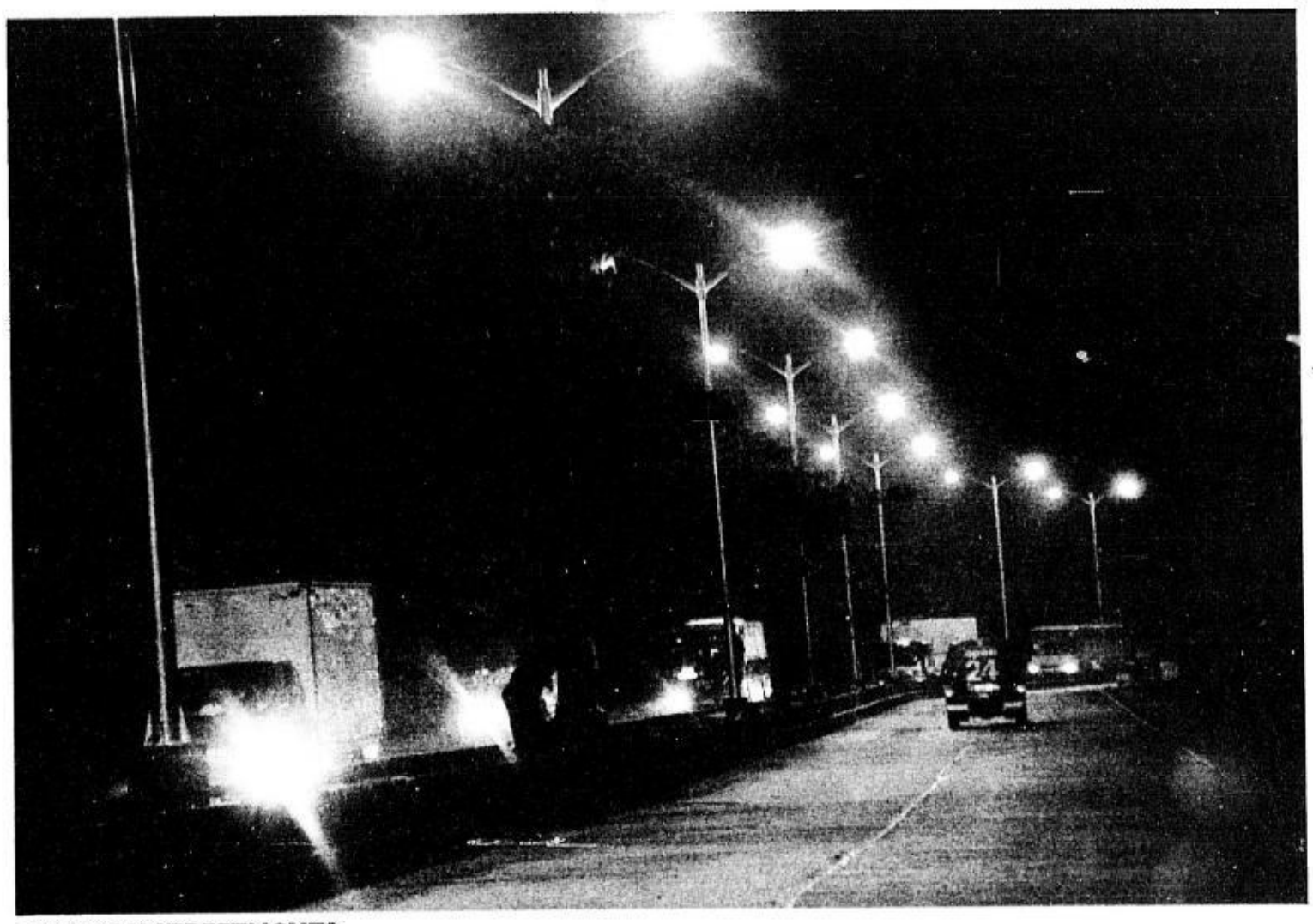


TUNASAN STREETLIGHTS
Motorists plying the Susana Heights Road in Tunasan, Muntinlupa City can now drive safely with the installation of new streetlights on the thoroughfare. The road was also recently rehabilitated through the initiative of Mayor Aldrin San Pedro and the City Council. Susana Heights Road is a vital link between the South Superhighway and San Pedro, Laguna. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Uneasy Korean tips off police to drugs in car

By Allison W. Lopez

A KOREAN MAN WHO WAS stopped by the police for a traffic violation in Malate, Manila yesterday morning was later arrested for illegal drug possession after a plastic sachet with suspected shabu (methamphetamine hydrochloride) was found in his car.

Cho Yong Hen, also known as Lee Jin Hyoung and Jeff Lee, 28, of Suite 204, Sunrise Center Building on P. Ocampo Avenue, Malate, was behind the wheel of a gray Toyota Vios when policemen led by SPO4 Lauro Marudo flagged him down for driving against the flow of traffic on Pablo Ocampo corner Taft Avenue.

The police, however, became suspicious when they noted that the Korean seemed uneasy. They later saw, with the help of a flashlight, a roll of aluminum foil—a shabu paraphernalia—in the back seat.

The police then searched the car and found a plastic sachet containing what seemed to be shabu under the driver's seat.

Cho was taken to the Malate police station and charged with illegal counterflow. Police said the contents of the sachet would be subjected to laboratory tests.

METRO citizen's call

0918-8985566

Flesh trade in the open

IRRITATING scene at St. Mary Street corner Aurora Boulevard in Quezon City: *Daming nagtitinda ng laman, daming bugaw. Wala bang magagawa ang gobyerno natin dito? Nakakahiya.* (There's a thriving flesh trade with plenty of pimps around. Can't the government do anything about it? This is shameful).

JOHN, 37, Cubao, Quezon City

Extortionist cops

LAST Nov. 26 at 1:25 p.m., I was in a PRC-Mantrade jeepney waiting for passengers at the corner of Edsa Mantrade and Chino Roces Avenue in Makati City when a mobile patrol car with license plate SFU 190 parked nearby. They asked a barker to collect P10 from each jeepney driver waiting in the queue for passengers. They needed money *daw* "for gas." They are turning hard-working drivers into milking cows. Disgusting!

ANNA, 30, Makati City

Lights for Malibay overpass, please

I WOULD like to ask your help regarding the installation of lights at the Malibay overpass. Using it at night is risky since it has become a nest for holdup men. Thanks.

JOHN ISRAEL, 32, Pasay City

Hold that elevator!

I HAVE seen so many people hurt by elevator doors that close automatically. Isn't it about time people know the function of the "hold" button? It wasn't put there so you can just stare at it.

LORA MEJOS, 24, Quezon City

House or barangay hall?

I'D LIKE to share with you our problem in Barangay 394, Zone 40, Quiapo. *May bago po kaming barangay hall pero hindi ninyo ito mapapansin kung baguhan kayo. Dahil nakatago po ang signage nito, gumawa ng extension diumano ang mga kamag-anak ng opisyales ng barangay. Akala mo tuloy, bahay na nila ito. Madalas din ang sugalan (mahjong) at inuman dito* (We have a new barangay hall, but you would hardly notice it if you are a newcomer in the area. Because you can hardly see the signage, an extension was built allegedly by relatives of a barangay official. You'd think this was their home. Mahjong games and drinking sessions are often held here.

CESAR, 30, Quiapo, Manila

METROBRIEFS

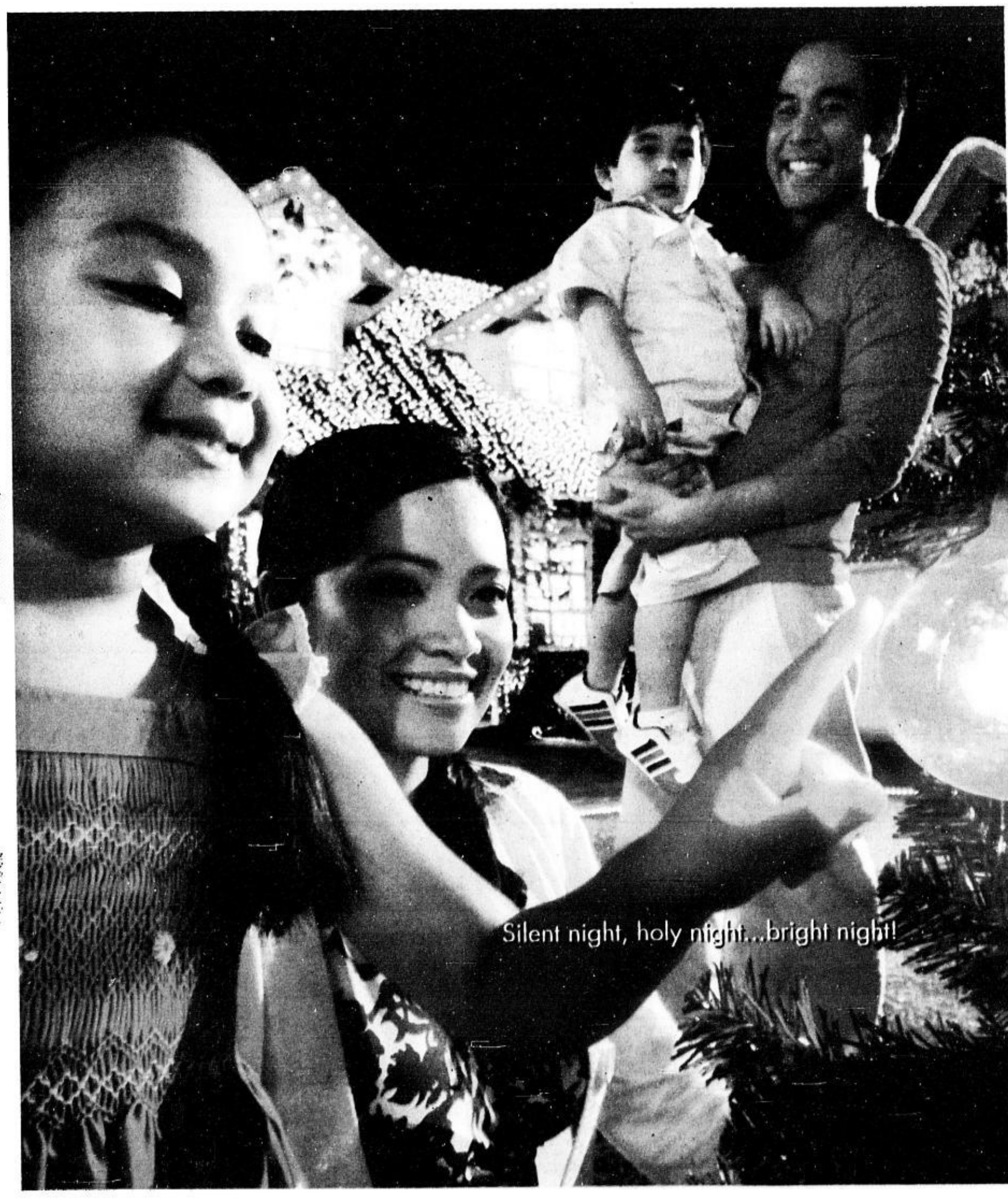
Thieves break into FEU professor's house

A UNIVERSITY professor lost P150,000 worth of jewelry after thieves broke into his house in Sta. Cruz, Manila the other day. Wilson Chua, a Far Eastern University professor and resident of the Goldlink Cargo Forwarder Building on Oroquieta corner Remigio Streets, said that he discovered the theft after he came home from work after midnight Saturday. The lock to his door had been destroyed, his things were in disarray while several pieces of jewelry were missing, he told the police. PO2 Jerico Jimenez of the Manila Police District's Theft and Robbery section said that they were still investigating the incident.

Allison W. Lopez

Art exhibit ongoing until Dec. 10

CROSSING Boundaries, a solo exhibit by Anton del Castillo, is ongoing until Dec. 10 at the Art Space, 3rd Level, Glorietta 4 in Makati City. Del Castillo, 2003 Metrobank Art & Design Excellence first prize winner for oil-based media in the canvas category, recently completed a six-month grant from The Rockefeller Foundation to study Byzantine art in New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Washington, D.C. He also concluded a residency program at the International Studio and Curatorial Program in Manhattan, New York. For more information, send an e-mail to Art Cabinet Philippines at artcabinet@gmail.com.



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Turkey says it attacked Kurdish fighters in Iraq

ISTANBUL, TURKEY—THE Turkish military said Saturday that it had inflicted "significant losses" on a group of Kurdish guerrillas in Iraq, though it offered no evidence for its claim.

In a terse, vague statement on its website, the military said it had identified a group of 50 to 60 fighters just across the border in Iraq, and that it had carried out "an intensive operation" against them.

Reuters cited an unidentified Turkish military official as saying that about 100 Turkish special forces had entered northern Iraq, struck the fighters and returned. The official military statement, however, gave no indication that troops had crossed the border. Iraqi officials denied any incursion had taken place.

A Turkish member of parliament from the ruling Justice and Development Party indicated that the attack was part of a series of artillery strikes against rebel positions along the border that have been going on for months, and not the large-scale offensive that the American and Iraqi governments had feared.

"It's not an invasion or a war in northern Iraq," said the member of parliament, who requested anonymity because he was not authorized to speak publicly about the developments. "This is just a limited operation for the moment."

Turkey has been threatening to send its military into northern Iraq to attack fighters from the group, the Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK, which is based in both countries. The group has fought the Turkish military for decades over demands for an autonomous Kurdish region there.

But a major incursion is viewed as unlikely, in part because it would require Turkey, a Nato member, to rebuff the United States, a strong ally.

The Turkish military said it would use "other means" in the future, if required.

The US military in Baghdad said it had no "operational reports" of a Turkish incursion. Haval Zagros, a PKK spokesperson, denied that the Turks had entered Iraqi territory or fired at its positions.

"There have been no clashes between the PKK and the Turkish army," he said. "Today, none of our bases has been struck by Turkish forces."

Mohammed Amidi, a spokesperson for the Kurdish Democratic Party, one of the main parties in the Kurdish regional government, and Col. Hussein Rasheed, the commander of the Iraqi border protection forces in Dohuk province, both denied news media reports that Turkish special forces had crossed the frontier. *NYT*

KIDNAPPED French-Colombian politician Ingrid Betancourt is seen in a video released by the Colombian government in Bogota Nov. 30. The Colombian government broadcast videos on Friday of Betancourt and three Americans in the first proof since 2003 that the high-profile rebel hostages were still alive. REUTERS

We are living like the dead, Colombia hostage writes

BOGOTA, COLOMBIA—A FORMER PRESIdential candidate held by leftist rebels describes in an emotional letter how she has lost her hair, appetite and hope after nearly six years constantly on the move in Colombia's jungles.

The letter, along with videos released by government officials Friday, were the first evidence in years that Ingrid Betancourt and other rebel-held hostages including three US military contractors may still be alive.

The materials were seized during the arrest in Bogota of three suspected members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC.

"Here, we are living like the dead," Betancourt writes to her mother. The dual French national was kidnapped in February 2002 while campaigning for the presidency.

An outspoken former lawmaker who was once determined to tackle Colombia's rampant corruption, Betancourt sounds resigned and weakened in the 12-page handwritten letter, which is dated Oct. 24. Excerpts were released to The Associated Press in Paris by people close to her family.

"I no longer have the same strength, it is very difficult for me to continue believing," she writes. "I am not well physically ... My appetite is frozen, my hair is falling out in large quantities."

A short videotape released with the letter shows grainy images of an extremely gaunt Betancourt staring at the ground, rosary in hand.

On Saturday, Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, who had been trying to broker a prisoners-for-hostages swap until Colombia's government canceled that role last month, said FARC chief Manuel "Sureshot" Marulanda has expressed willingness to free a group of hostages as part of talks with him.

"My visit there would have to be conditioned on the liberation of a first group of people, to begin with, and Marulanda accepted," Chavez said. "I'm sure that was going to happen."

He blamed the US government and President Alvaro Uribe's administration for scuttling that possibility because he claimed they didn't want it to happen.

The Venezuelan leader did not provide specifics to back up the accusation but said Venezuela would still be willing—even without Uribe's blessing—to receive any group of hostages freed by the FARC for humanitarian reasons.

It was not clear who the FARC might have been considering freeing from its 46 high-profile hostages, including the Americans and Betancourt.

Each of the three Northrop Grumman Corp. contractors, who have been held since their surveillance plane went down in February 2003 in rebel territory, also appear in videos.

In an interview with the left-wing Bolivarian press agency released Saturday, a FARC commander who calls himself "Ivan Marquez" said the group would not send more proof that the captives are alive anytime soon because it was too risky for the people delivering it.

"Bogota's folly forces the FARC to take drastic actions because it cannot run the risk that other emissaries will be detained," said Marquez, who is also known as Marin Arango.

Marquez had recently met with Chavez in Caracas for talks on a deal that would swap rebel-held hostages for imprisoned rebels. "We are profoundly sorry that all the families won't receive proof of life of their loved ones for Christmas, as we had hoped."

In the letter, Betancourt describes stretching to relieve her sore neck, speaking as little as possible, and says it is a "problem" to be the only woman among several male prisoners, some of whom have been held for a decade.

"Life is not life here, but ... a gloomy waste of time," she writes. "I live, or subsist, on a hammock stretched between two stakes, covered with a mosquito net and with a tarp above."

The families of Betancourt and the other hostages welcomed the proof their loved ones were still alive but expressed frustration at the lack of progress toward their release. Some blamed Uribe, who has said he would prefer to rescue them in military operations.

The US, French and Colombian governments had demanded evidence the captives were alive during Chavez's mediation effort to win the release of hostages held by the FARC.

Although it now appears the FARC intended to eventually deliver the material, Uribe abruptly ended Chavez's mediation role on Nov. 21.

The rebel commander, Marquez, confirmed the videos and letters were destined for Chavez. Marquez added: "With Uribe acting this way, there will never be an exchange." *AP*

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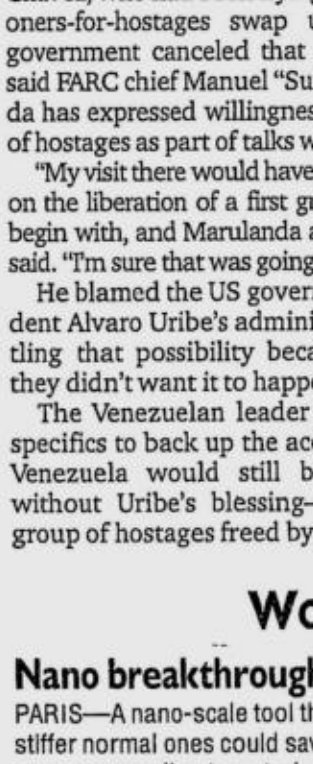
WORLDBRIEFS

Nano breakthrough in cancer detection

PARIS—A nano-scale tool that distinguishes soft cancerous cells from stiffer normal ones could save lives by making it easier to diagnosis cancer, according to a study released Sunday. Using atomic force microscopes, a team of US scientists showed for the first time that the surface of living cancer cells were more than 70 percent softer than their healthy counterparts. This measurable difference in elasticity held true across lung, breast and pancreatic cancers, and could provide a powerful means of detecting malignant cells that might otherwise escape notice, said the study, published in the British journal Nature Nanotechnology. *AFP*

Chinese beauty stands tall as Miss World



ZHANG AFP

SANYA, China—A beaming Zhang Zilin was busy plotting her travels round the globe Sunday after the Chinese beauty wowed the home crowd to become China's first-ever Miss World. The statuesque 23-year-old pipped her rival finalists from Angola and Mexico to take the crown at the 57th edition of the beauty pageant—which organizers said was watched by a global television audience of two billion people. The model-thin Zhang, who nevertheless says her favorite foods are chocolate and ice cream, was the tallest of the 106 contestants at 182 cm (six feet)—and was standing even taller after Saturday's win. "I'm the first Chinese to win the title and more importantly I won in my own country," said Zhang. *AFP*

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MONDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2007

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

World powers seek new Iran sanctions

PARIS—THE SIX POWERS DEALING WITH IRAN'S contested nuclear program will start work on a resolution calling for new sanctions against Iran at the UN Security Council, a French diplomatic source said Saturday after a meeting here.

"The six have agreed to examine the elements of a new resolution on sanctions" against Tehran, said the diplomat, who asked to remain anonymous.

"A compromise text will be worked out and should circulate between the capital cities concerned next week."

The text would be sent to the UN Security Council in New York if the countries manage to agree on the details, the source added.

Tehran is already under two sets of UN sanctions, as well as unilateral US sanctions, for refusing to suspend uranium enrichment.

Representatives of the United States, Russia, China, France, Britain and Germany met in Paris on Saturday to discuss Iran's contested nuclear program after last-ditch talks failed to produce a breakthrough.

The European Union's foreign policy chief Javier Solana said he was "disappointed" after the talks in London on Friday with Iranian nuclear negotiator Saeed Jalili, hours before a deadline for him to report back to world powers on the issue.

"I have to admit that after five hours of meetings I expected more, and therefore I am disappointed," Solana told reporters.

The talks were seen as a last chance for Tehran before a possible new round of sanctions, though hopes of a breakthrough had been slim.

Jalili said Saturday that Iran was not to blame for the disappointment expressed by Solana.

"The fact is that we defended the Iranian nation's rights and stressed fulfilling our duties and that the Iranian nation will not accept anything that goes beyond the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty," he said.

"If some people have become disappointed because they cannot deprive Iran of its natural rights then this is another matter," Jalili told reporters after arriving back in Tehran.

Western nations suspect Iran is using its nuclear program to covertly develop a nuclear bomb. Despite Iranian denials, the United States and its allies are pressing for stronger UN sanctions against Tehran, a move resisted by China and Russia. *AFP*

WHAT'S INSIDE

Medal finish on the cards for lady booters /A30

SPORTS

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Rookie captures skeet silver

Golden sweep looms for men

By Musong R. Castillo

BANGKOK—AN UNEXPECTED SILVER medal in women's skeet shooting from rookie Jacqueline de Guzman on Sunday provided a whiff of exhilarating air for the Philippine shooting contingent after six days of the 24th Southeast Asian Games.

And the chance of another SEA Games double kill loomed for the men's squad as the Filipinos tied for the team lead and put all three of their bets inside the top five after 75 birds of qualifying at the Thailand Target and Clay Ranges here.

De Guzman, a 26-year-old who took up the sport only 18 months ago, finished second in qualifying and stayed there after 25 more shots in the finals, producing a silver that glittered like gold for an RP delegation that has been without a medal for the last four days.

Only a very bad start—an 18 in the first round—prevented the call-center owner from truly contending for the gold medal right in her very first Games.

The chubby De Guzman tallied 84 points, 12 behind gold medal winner and Thai Olympic bet Sutiya Jiewchaloemmit, who let just four birds slip away in an overpowering performance that proved too much for the compact six-woman field.

Nutchaya Sut-Arporn bagged the bronze with a total of 80, as De Guzman kept the Thai at bay in the finals by tallying a solid 20.

It was a great ending for De Guzman, who missed seven targets in her first round only to rebound with two straight 23s and that 20.

"It's really exciting to win something in my first SEA Games," De Guzman said. "There was a bit of pressure to deliver out there, being a rookie in the final round.

"But it really was not something that I could not handle," De Guzman, who was a spectator in the Manila SEAG two years ago, added. "I just love to shoot. There was a little bit of pressure, but nothing that I couldn't handle."

Thailand raised its gold-silver-bronze haul to 12-15-6.

It was the second silver medal for the Philippines after the men's trap team of Jethro Dionisio, Carlos Carag and Eric Ang finished second to Singapore on Wednesday.

But an RP breakthrough was on the horizon as Brian Rosario, Pablito Bernardo and Gabriel Tong tied for third spot while boosting their team on top with Thailand with 207 totals.

Rosario, who has declined interviews to maintain his focus, owned the first perfect round by nailing all 25 birds in his first set be-

ROOKIE/ A30

24th SOUTHEAST ASIAN GAMES

Medal tally	G	S	B
Thailand	12	15	6
Singapore	8	6	4
Vietnam	7	3	11
Malaysia	2	3	5
Myanmar	2	2	1
Philippines	0	2	1
Indonesia	0	0	2
Laos	0	0	0
Brunei	0	0	0
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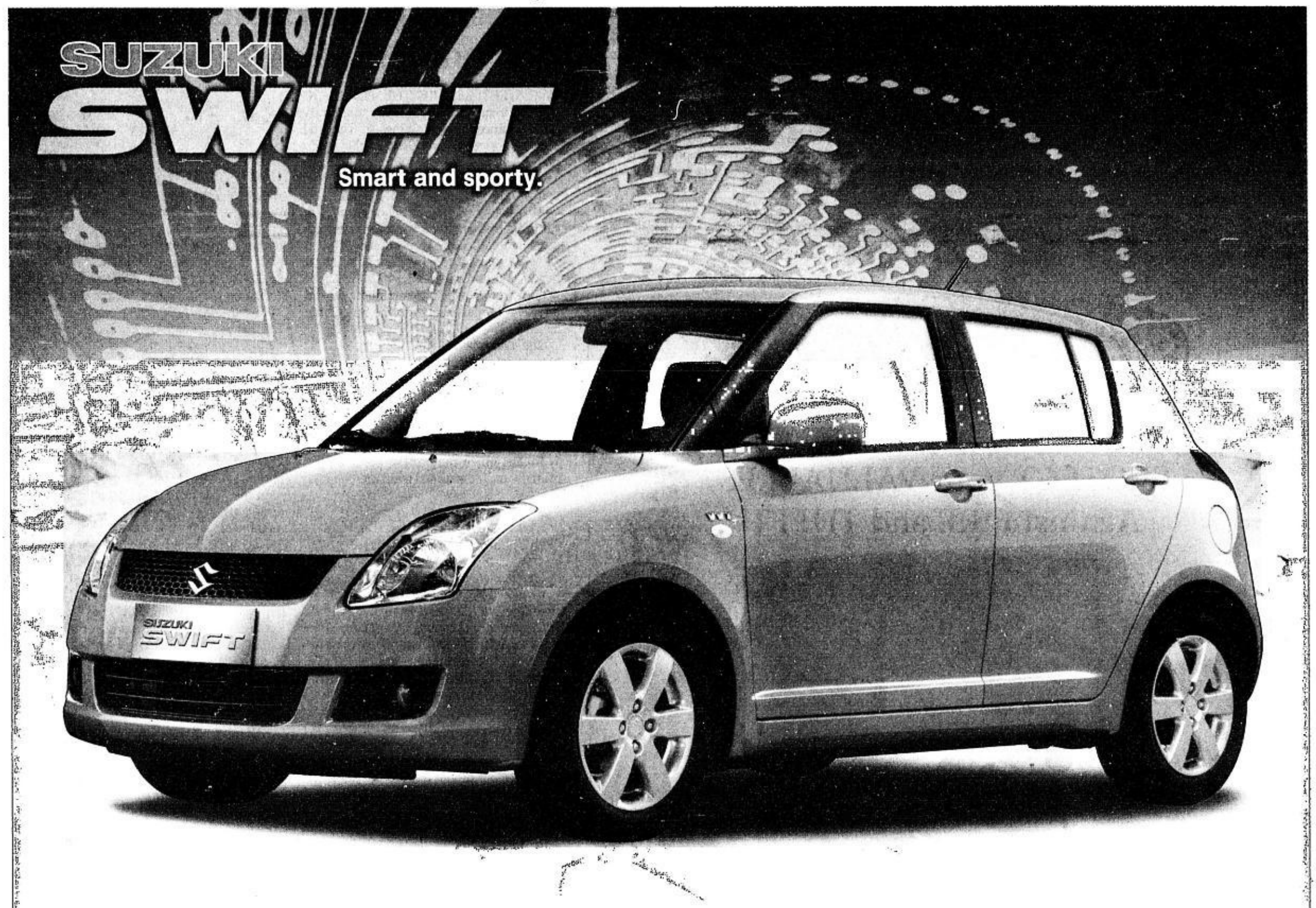

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Medal finish on cards for lady booters

By Musong R. Castillo

BANGKOK—THIS TEAM WILL HAVE A LOT TO PROVE.

The Philippine women's football squad debuts against lowly Laos Monday, highly favored to win and make the Final Four of the 24th Southeast Asian Games in Nakhon Ratchasima.

Sent in lieu of the men's team because of their better chances at landing a medal, the lady booters need just a win in their two elimination-round matches to make the semifinals and move within a victory of at least a bronze.

The nationals, fourth placers two years ago in Marikina City, have defending champion Vietnam as their other rivals in Group A.

The Vietnamese ripped the Filipino squad silly in an AFC tournament early this year, 1-9, and they wouldn't want to face Vietnam in a must-win game to advance.

Veteran Marielle Benitez and Fil-American Mariko Elizabeth Alley will lead the nationals against Laos in the match scheduled at 3:15 p.m. at the Tumbon Muenapug Stadium.

Thailand, Myanmar and Singapore make up the other group.

The format calls for the top two placers to advance to the crossover semifinals with the group topnotchers facing the No. 2 team in the other bracket.

The Philippine SEAG Task Force opted to send the women's team because the men's squad failed to guarantee that it could assemble a strong team powered by foreign players with Filipino roots, just as it did in 2005, when it barely missed making the semifinal round in Bacolod.

Chelsea Team B members Phil and James Younghusband said they could not make the trip, and the men's squad scratched plans of competing altogether—even if the Task Force had offered to pay for its trip.

ANGELINE Impelido lends speed and control to the RP ladies squad. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Execs' row: A question of credibility

BANGKOK—RICHIE GARCIA, THE PSC COMmissioner who was called names by athletics chief Go Teng Kok on Saturday, has one very brief message to the Patafa head.

"If our names are mentioned together, who do you think has more integrity?" Garcia told the INQUIRER Saturday as he went about looking after the Filipino athletes' needs in Nakhon Ratchasima, site of the bulk of SEA Games competitions.

"I don't want my name to be dragged along with his," Garcia added.

Go had called Garcia "Mr. 30 percent" and a liar as the two traded accusations over the PSC supply of equipment and shoes to SEAG-bound track and field athletes.

***

Rugby player Juan Gabriel Landig Castro was almost denied accreditation by the organizing committee here Sunday because he couldn't show a Philippine passport.

Castro, who is based in Australia, enjoys dual citizenship, and he left for these Games without an RP passport. But after RP secretariat staff showed organizers a copy of an order and an oath of allegiance from the Philippine Consulate in Australia, Castro got his accreditation. He will join the rest of the team when rugby action begins on Dec. 9. *Musong R. Castillo*

Rookie captures skeet silver

From page A29

fore Bernardo duplicated the feat in the next as the Filipinos zoomed to a seven-point lead over Thailand, 145-138.

Rosario, the defending individual gold medalist, finished with a 69 like Bernardo and Tong and trailed Thailand's Krisada Varadharmapinich and Jiranunt Hathaichukiat by a point.

But just when it looked like the Filipinos would break away, the Thais mounted a rally in the final 25 targets with Varadharmapinich having a perfect stint of his own and Bernardo shooting only 22 for the best Philippine score.

Rosario and Tong had just 21 each.

The final 50 shots in the classification are set for Monday with the team champion to be determined after that.

"We're still in good shape, we're still OK and we still like our chances," team manager Pol Rosario, Brian's father and coach who also acts as the team manager, said. "The morale of the boys is high."

The women's football team gets going Monday against newcomer Laos at 3:15 p.m. at the Tumbon Muenapug Stadium in Nakohn Ratchasima province.

Regular Fil-Am action tees off today

By Jong Arcano

BAGUIO CITY—THE DEFENDING champion team takes a new name as Club Marinduque but the competition should feature the same faces with Manila Southwoods playing the challenger role as usual in the regular Fil-Am golf championships which start today at the Baguio Country Club and Camp John Hay courses.

It's been much like a poker game for the main protagonists with Club Marinduque, bannered by mainstays of the Calatagan stable of Tommy Manotoc, and Manila Southwoods, built around talents of the ICTSI camp under Bong Lopez, keeping their cards close to their chests.

The participation of marquee players like Jay Bayron, Anthony Fernando and Tommy Manotoc remains a big mystery and up until yesterday's opening cocktails, even organizers are tight-lipped on the final lineups.

Bayron is expected to suit up for a Club Marinduque/Calatagan team he led to three straight titles here one last time before he turns pro while Manotoc may join his boys to boost their sweep bid in the event's 58th edition.

Fernando, the reigning Philippine amateur champ, is reportedly waiting for his reinstatement as an amateur by the National Golf Association of the Philippines that would clear the way for his Fil-Am stint for Southwoods.

The Fil-Championship flight will not start until Wednesday.

'Why remove the two best bowlers from RP team?'

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

ONE WEEK BEFORE THE PHILIPPINE bowling team's scheduled departure for the 24th Southeast Asian Games in Thailand, Steve Hontiveros, president of the Philippine Bowling Congress, informed Markwin Tee and Joonee Gatchalian that they were being removed from the national squad.

This is highly irregular as there was no sufficient reason for the ouster, cried one coach who posed these questions:

"Why remove the two best players, as shown in the scoring session?"

"Why remove the two remaining defending RP gold medalists from the SEA Games team?"

The two players, for the record, have been training regularly and performing better than their peers, cried the coach who requested anonymity.

The address and email of this coach were provided the INQUIRER, but we're withholding them for obvious reasons.

To strengthen the protest, here's a letter from the ousted national team members:

***

Board of Directors
c/o Mr. Steve Hontiveros
Philippine Bowling Congress

Greetings of peace!

We would like to formally submit a protest regarding our dismissal from the National Team to the upcoming Southeast Asian Games. We feel that the reasons for these dismissals are unfounded and, therefore, unfair.

First of all, as we have recently discovered, the matter of inclusion to the National Team was never discussed in the previous board meeting held last Nov. 10, so we can only infer that this decision was not a board decision, but a personal one. This is terribly unfair not only to us, but also to the board of directors. This arbitrary decision shows that the power of the board has been disregarded.

We were selected to be part of the National Team through a board-approved criterion, which was to be among the top six in the National Team scoring session held last August.

How can we then be dismissed capriciously when the board has not even discussed the matter? We fear that a decision like this would not reflect kindly on the PBC as an institution.

Secondly, we find no reason for us to be dismissed from the team. If our dismissal has something to do with our competence and capabilities as players, then we cannot find any good reason for our dismissal.

For the record, we are the only remaining defending Southeast Asian Games gold medalists in the RP men's team. Joonee garnered the gold in the men's doubles event, while Markwin won the gold in the men's masters event. Also, we were silver medalists in the teams-of-five event and Markwin also won the silver medal in the singles, while bowling a perfect game. Meanwhile, Markwin was number one among all bowlers while Joonee was fifth overall in the National Team tryouts held last February. In a span of 6 days and 72 games, Markwin bowled a series of 15,321 pinfalls or a 212.79 average, while Joonee bowled a series of 14,917 pinfalls or a 207.18 average. Furthermore, in the National Team scoring session to decide the lineup for the Asian Indoor Games and the Southeast Asian Games, Markwin and Joonee were the first- and second-ranked bowlers among the members of the National Team, respectively. In a span of 10 days and 100 games, Markwin garnered a total of 59.03 ranking points, while Joonee garnered 51.24. Both our outputs are over 120 points higher than any of the bowlers they are trying to replace us with.

In the 36th Boysen PBC Open, Markwin posted the highest average among team members in our mandated scoring session, averaging 220 pinfalls. Moreover, he was the highest-placed Filipino in the tournament, topping the 16-game masters event and finishing as the tournament's first runner-up. With just these three examples, it has to be evident that, based on bowling competence alone, we deserve places in the National Team.

Thirdly, if our dismissal is because we lack desire, dedication or discipline, we must say again that there is no basis for that. Apart from the numerous personal sacrifices that we have made for this team, we have the best attendance records. Since the start of centralized training, we were both present in all but one training session. Furthermore, we were never late for training and never left earlier than the team mandated time. How then can it be said that we have no dedication or discipline?

We have sacrificed our potential incomes and personal lives for the good of the country. We have poured our heart and soul into this team.

Lastly, our dismissal comes at a most inopportune time for the team. We have been bowling over six hours a day as a team for the past quarter of the year. Any move to change the composition of the team will unnecessarily dampen the team's camaraderie and morale.

In this connection, we respectfully request that an emergency board meeting be called to act on this matter. We would like to make it clear that this protest is being filed with the utmost respect. What moved us to write this is our unconditional love and passion both for our country and the sport of tenpin bowling.

Sincerely in Christ,
Markwin L. Tee
Ernesto "Joonee" Gatchalian
National Team Bowlers

70 fights in SJC derby today

METRO MANILA'S COCKFIGHT ENTHUSIASTS converge today at the San Juan Coliseum for the "Baldo and Shio" 4-cock derby which gets underway at 4 p.m. with more than 70 fights on tap.

Hosts Baldo Perez and SJC pit manager Renato Shio have put up a guaranteed prize of P300,000 for the winners.

Derby top guns such as Louie Cua, Patrick Antonio, Max and Bebot Roxas of Tarlac, Boy de Roca, Rio Salceda, Pol Estrellado, Butchoy Olano, Eric dela Rosa, Mario Garcia, Butch Nunez, Hermie Herrera and Elmer Nepomuceno are seeing action.

Happy Holidays!

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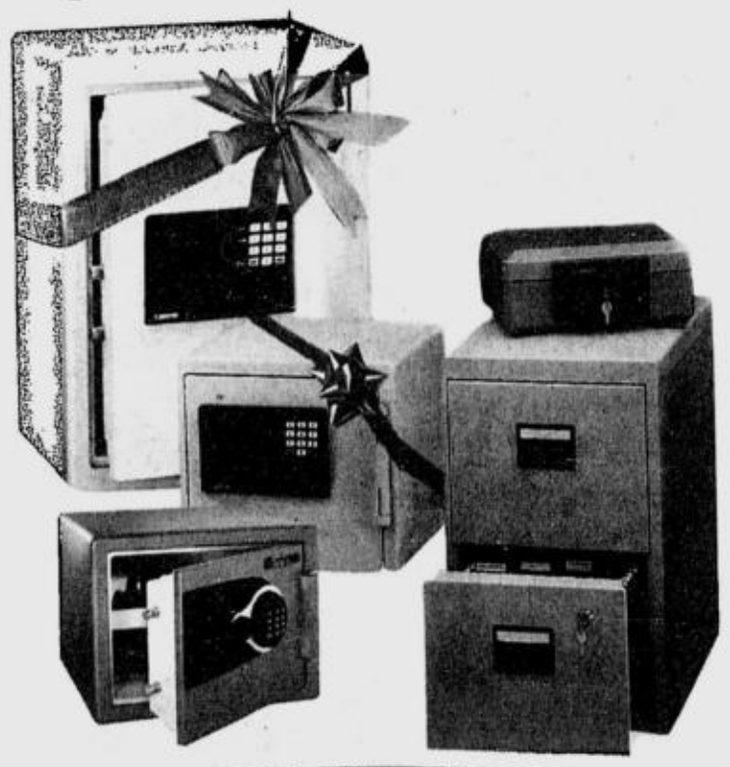

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Sadorra stuns GM Zhang, joins 13-man leaders' tier

Standings after two rounds:
2.0 points—**R. Antonio (RP), D. Laylo (RP), W. So (RP), O. Dimakiling (RP), J. Sadorra (RP), O. Barbosa (RP), D. Elorta (RP)**, H. Ni (China), E. Ghaem (Iran), Tirto (Indonesia), Q. Huang (China), D. T. Hai (Vietnam), R. Li (Singapore); 1.5— **R. Dableo (RP), R. Bitoon (RP), B. Nadera (RP), I. Adante (RP)**, L. Chao (China), N.A. Dung (Vietnam), G. Xiaobing (China)

By Roy Luarca

THE COUNTRY'S NEWEST CHESS SENSAtion is on the prowl again.

International Master Julio Catalino Sadorra stunned second seed Grandmaster Zhang Zhong of Singapore yesterday to lead 12 others with perfect two points in the Prospero Pichay Jr. Cup International Open at the Duty Free Fiesta Mall in Parañaque City.

The little-known, Singapore-based Sadorra dropped the axe on Zhang (Elo 2634) after 48 moves of the Nimzo Indian to post the most talked-about reversal in the second of the nine-round championship.

Sadorra—who also created a stir in last week's President Macapagal-Arroyo Cup with a remarkable upset of tournament favorite GM Ni Hua of China—overwhelmed unheralded R.J. Magallanes for his first point.

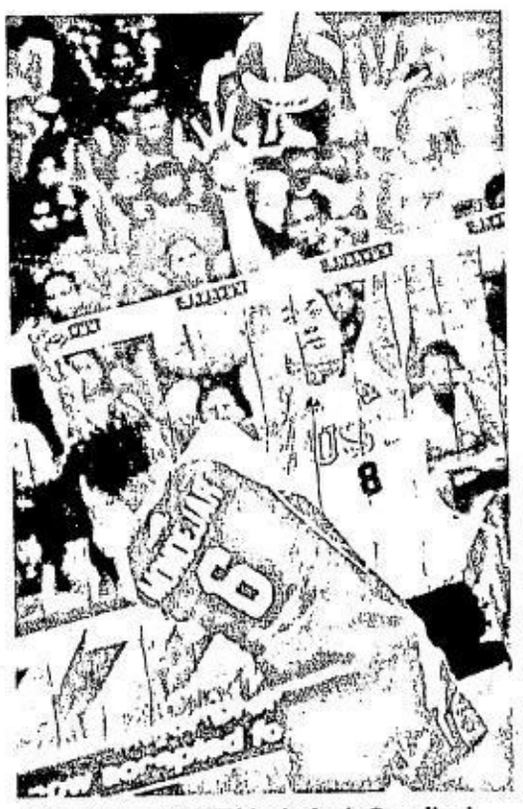
"The winning line became clear as I pressed the attack (against Zhang)," said Sadorra. " I hope I can continue to play well."

As resounding as Sadorra's first two salvoes were compatriot David Elorta's two upset wins against higher-ranked Hamed Nouri of Negros Occidental, and China's Zhou Weiqi.

Sadorra and Elorta shared the lead with five other Filipinos—GMs Rogelio Antonio Jr. and Darwin Laylo, IMs Wesley So and Oliver Dimakiling and National Master Oliver Barbosa—and GM Ni Hua and Woman IM Huang Qian of China, GM Ehsan Ghame Maghami of Iran, Tirto of Indonesia, WGM Li Ruofan of Singapore and GM Dao Thien Hai of Vietnam.

Antonio, the country's highest-rated player with an ELO of 2540, bested compatriot NM Arlan Cabe and IM Halay Taufik of Indonesia while Laylo downed Mirabeau Maga and Voltaire Sevilano.

So dumped Rhobel Legaspi and Rolando Nolte, Dimakiling crushed Fernandito Pialana and NM Petronio Roca and Barbosa trounced Boris Michael Diez and Jason Salubre.



AIZA Maizo of UST blocks Lady Stag Jinni Mondejar in yesterday's game. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

UST forges Shakey's V-League decider

By Romina S. Austria

UNIVERSITY OF SANTO TOMAS THOROUGHLY DOMINATED SAN SEBAStian College, hacking out a 25-16, 25-15, 25-21 win yesterday to send the 2007 Shakey's V-League women's volleyball second conference championship into a winner-take-all Game Three tomorrow.

The decider is set at 5 p.m., also at The Arena in San Juan.

The jampacked crowd that expected a close match, like Game One's five-setter Friday, was treated to the Tigresses' all-around game instead.

No UST player stole the show. Instead, good ball rotation and team blocking left the Lady Stags wondering what hit them. The Tigresses stopped 57 of the Lady Stags' attacks, converting 11 points off those blocks.

Lady Stag import Jaroensri Bualee was also limited to just 17 points. The Thai, who averages almost 30 points a game, made 25 in the series opener won by San Sebastian, 25-16, 25-19, 17-25, 23-25, 15-13.

San Sebastian was still within striking distance at 19-21 in the third set but Angeli Tabaquero scored off a block while Lady Stag Laurence Ann Latigay's return shot was foiled for a 23-19 UST lead.

Rysabelle Devanadera cut the lead to 20-24 but Jinni Mondejar hastened SSC's fall when her serve hit the net.

Devanadera scored one last time before UST ended the match with a point off a block that landed outside the sideline.

UST coach August Santamaria said teamwork and Mary Jean Balse's inspired performance keyed the series-tying victory.

"Where Balse goes, the team goes," said Santamaria of his veteran tosser. "My players played a relaxed game and did not think of their previous loss."

PHINMA ITF

Alcantara falls in finals

ILYUSHIN RYAN LIM

By Jasmine W. Payo

FRANCIS CASEY Alcantara could not find the form that brought him to the finals and the remaining Filipino bet settled for runner-up finishes in the singles and doubles play of the Phinma International Junior Circuit Week 1 yesterday at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

The second-seeded Alcantara bowed to Russian Artem Ilyushin, who exploited the Cagayan de Oro standout's weak backhand to post a 6-4, 6-3 upset for the boys' singles crown.

"I couldn't believe I won," the 16-year-old Ilyushin said after capturing his first International Tennis Federation (ITF) title. "I was just lucky."

Alcantara later teamed up with Australian James Duckworth but the top-ranked duo fell to the No. 4 pair of Huang Liang-chi and Li Chieh-lin of Taiwan, 6-3, 2-6, 6-3, in the final.

Ilyushin, who earned 30 ITF points for the victory, weathered a tough stand by Alcantara, who rallied after trailing 1-5 in the first set.

The 15-year-old Alcantara came to life by winning the next three games, breaking Ilyushin's serve twice with an array of shots to close in at 5-4.

But Ilyushin broke back in the 10th game to claim the opening set.

Ilyushin took an early lead in the second set and wrapped up the win in one hour and 35 minutes.

"He played well," said Alcantara of Ilyushin, who also stunned the top-seeded Huang in the semifinals.

In the girls' singles, Romania's Bianca Hincu bucked a flu to down Australia's Cody Morris, 6-4, 7-6 (3), for the championship.

Lee Hua-chen and Juan Yu-chu completed Taiwan's sweep with a 6-2, 6-3 triumph over Satjaporn Mahajaroenkul and Laili Rahmawati Ulfa of Thailand in the doubles.

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US Davis Cup players (left to right) James Blake, Andy Roddick, Bob and Mike Bryan parade the US flag after the victory. AFP

US finally clinches Davis Cup

PORTLAND, OREGON—THE UNITED States won its first Davis Cup since 1995 with a doubles victory over defending champion Russia on Saturday.

Leading 2-0 in the best-of-five final, the Americans' powerful team of twins Bob and Mike Bryan cruised past Nikolay Davydenko and Igor Andreev, 7-6 (4), 6-4, 6-2, in a shade under two hours to seal the tie.

"No words can explain how we feel right now, except wooooooooo!" Mike Bryan exclaimed.

The once-dominant United States won its 32nd Davis Cup, and ended a 12-year drought, its longest span without a victory.

"To be here and to bring the Cup back to the States is just an amazing feeling," Andy Roddick said. "But more importantly, just to share the journey with these guys, it's been so much fun."

The US had not taken the first three matches of a Davis Cup final since 1990 against Australia.

Roddick and James Blake got the US off to a fast start on Friday, winning the opening singles at Memorial Coliseum. *AP*

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NEW ORLEANS Hornets forward David West gets a reverse off a phalanx of Dallas defenders. AP

Pistons rout weary Bucks

MILWAUKEE—TAYSHAUN Prince led the way with 20 points to help steer the Detroit Pistons to a 117-91 road victory over the weary Milwaukee Bucks on Saturday.

The Bucks were playing their fourth game in five nights and ended up losing all of them. The Pistons had not played since Wednesday.

"You could see they were a little bit tired," said Pistons coach Flip Saunders after his team won for the fourth time in the last five games.

Chauncey Billups had 18 points and nine assists and Rasheed Wallace 15 points and 10 rebounds in the easy victory for the Pistons.

"Right now we are operating on all cylinders and playing pretty efficiently on offense," Billups said.

"To score as many points as we did and how effective we were, considered we started a little sloppy, a little bit lethargic, we played our way into it and started executing. We really operated on all cylinders."

Pistons guard Richard Hamilton added: "We had a lot of things go well for us tonight. I think we played real well.

"It was just one of those games where everything was going so well for everybody and we got a win."

The Bucks blew a 17-point second-half lead in New York on Friday and lost to the Knicks.

"We're kind of in the middle of a downturn, no doubt," said Milwaukee coach Larry Krystowiak.

Two successive three-point plays by Jason Maxiell gave the Pistons an 18-16 lead and they never trailed again.

The New Orleans Hornets ended a 21-game losing streak to Dallas and beat the Mavericks for the first time since 1999 when they secured a 112-106 home overtime win. Peja Stojakovic forced overtime with a triple with 2.9 seconds left in regulation time and ended up with 22 points. *Reuters*

COMPLETE NBA RESULTS (home team in CAPS): WASHINGTON 101, Toronto 97; NEW JERSEY 94, Philadelphia 92 (OT); MEMPHIS 109, Minnesota 80; NEW ORLEANS 112, Dallas 108 (OT); CHICAGO 111, Charlotte 95; Detroit 117, MILWAUKEE 91; SACRAMENTO 107, Houston 99.

Cebu batters overwhelm Shoemakers; D'guete wins

CEBU CRUSHED MARIKINA, 16-8, yesterday to top the Southern Conference and clinch the twice-to-beat advantage against Dumaguete in the Division Finals of Baseball Philippines' Series2 at the Rizal Baseball Stadium.

The Dolphins, who also topped the elimination round in the pilot series early this year, peppered the erratic Shoemakers with 12 hits, scoring five runs each in the seventh and ninth innings to post their seventh win in 10 games.

Marikina, composed of standouts from University of the Philippines and Ateneo, dropped to 5-5 but still ended up second in the North conference.

Dumaguete finished second in the Southern Conference at 3-6 after blasting Forward Taguig, 13-6, despite showing up with only 11 men.

Marlon Caspillo smashed a two-run home run to highlight a six-run burst in the fourth inning by the Unibikers, who bucked the absence of their imports from the national team which is girding up for the Southeast Asian Games next week in Thailand.

"It's a nice way to enter the division championship with a win," said Cebu team manager Isaac Bacarisas, also the man at the helm of the RP men's softball squad in the SEAG.

The Shoemakers play the pilot series champions Makati Mariners, who finished third with a 4-6 (win-loss) slate, on Saturday, enjoying a twice-to-beat advantage. A do-or-die match, if necessary, is set on Sunday. *Marc Anthony Reyes*

Intercollegiate golf resumes at Canlubang

ATENEO AND DE LA SALLE BREAK their tie while Charles Hong seeks to keep the lead in the individual race in the third leg of the Philippine Golf Foundation-National Intercollegiate golf championship today and tomorrow at the north course of the Canlubang Golf and Country Club in Laguna. The Archers and the Eagles are tied at 18 points after splitting the first two legs in team play with La Salle winning by a rout in the first leg at Splendido and Ateneo coming back to rule the second leg plum at Mt. Malarayat. College of St. Benilde and Ateneo 2 share third place with eight points while Santo Tomas is in fifth with four points. La Salle's Hong is the individual leader with a 296 total after 72 holes, leading teammate Justin Limjap by just three strokes. Hong topped the first leg while Limjap claimed the second stop.

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WB unit prods gov't on key reforms

Recommendations to boost RP business climate

By Michelle V. Remo

INTERNATIONAL FINANCE Corp., a unit of the World Bank tasked to assist in private sector development, has provided the government with a list of recommendations to uplift the country's ranking in terms of providing a conducive climate for business.

Citing the Philippines' low rankings in a recent IFC business survey, the organization urged authorities to act fast in implementing the suggested reforms to prevent losing the game of winning more foreign direct investments.

"Reform in key areas could yield quick wins in terms of easing the private sector's ability to grow businesses in the Philippines. Focusing the country's efforts on reforms in these areas can deliver results relatively quickly and will help small and medium enterprises to flourish," the IFC said in a letter addressed to Finance

WB UNIT/ B6

IN THIS ISSUE

Gov't seen raising P6B from PNOC-EC stake sale /B4

SIS nets P35B from Jan. to Sept. /B5

Spanish firm investing $200M in biofuel sector

By Amy R. Remo

A MADRID-BASED BIODIESEL FIRM IS planning to invest $200 million in the Philippines to develop at least 100,000 hectares of land into jatropha plantations, the Department of Agriculture said.

The jatropha will be used as feedstock for biofuel facilities in the country.

According to Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap, Bionor Transformacion S.A., a global multi-feedstock firm, disclosed last month its plans to invest in the Philippines' biofuel sector through the memorandum of agreement signed between AME Bioenergy Corp. and Philippine Agricultural Development and Commercial Corp.

Under the agreement, AME is the "key integrator for Bionor in the country" and has been tasked to "identify suitable jatropha plantation sites, consolidate lands, organize and train farm labor and organize local support to install plantation infrastructure."

AME is likewise expected to study the cost structure for production to determine and recommend to Bionor whether its planned jatropha development project is economically viable and internationally

SPANISH/ B6

INDICATORS

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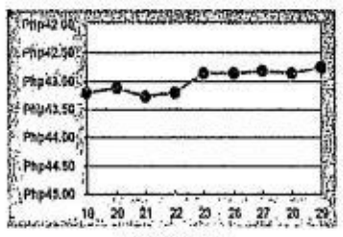

NOVEMBER

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STOCK MARKET

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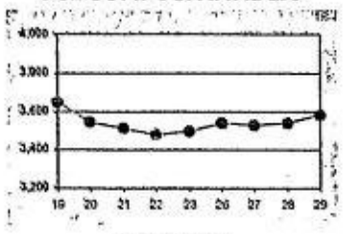

NOVEMBER

(See stock market report on Page B8)

Investors seen tracking Wall St.

IT MAY BE BACK TO NORMAL AT THE stock market today after an aborted siege by rebel soldiers of a Makati hotel last Thursday.

Renegade officers on trial for the 2003 Oakwood mutiny—led by Navy lieutenant and now Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV—sought to seize the Manila Peninsula hotel Thursday and called for the resignation of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"The market will wait and see the extent of the fallout in the Trillanes incident. Political uncertainty has been largely resolved but not completely gone. Government reactions (to the incident) may still cause some (political) uncertainty to linger," said Francisco Liboro, president at PCCI Securities.

"I think now that the Makati siege is over and everything is back to normal, the mood of the market will be dictated once more by the share price movements in the developed markets," Conrado Bate, president at Citiseconline.com, added.

Paul Joseph Garcia, chief investment officer at ING Investment Management, said that investors remained focused on economic fundamentals. "Fortunately, the incident was resolved quickly and without violence (and) will unlikely cause any ad-

INVESTORS/ B2

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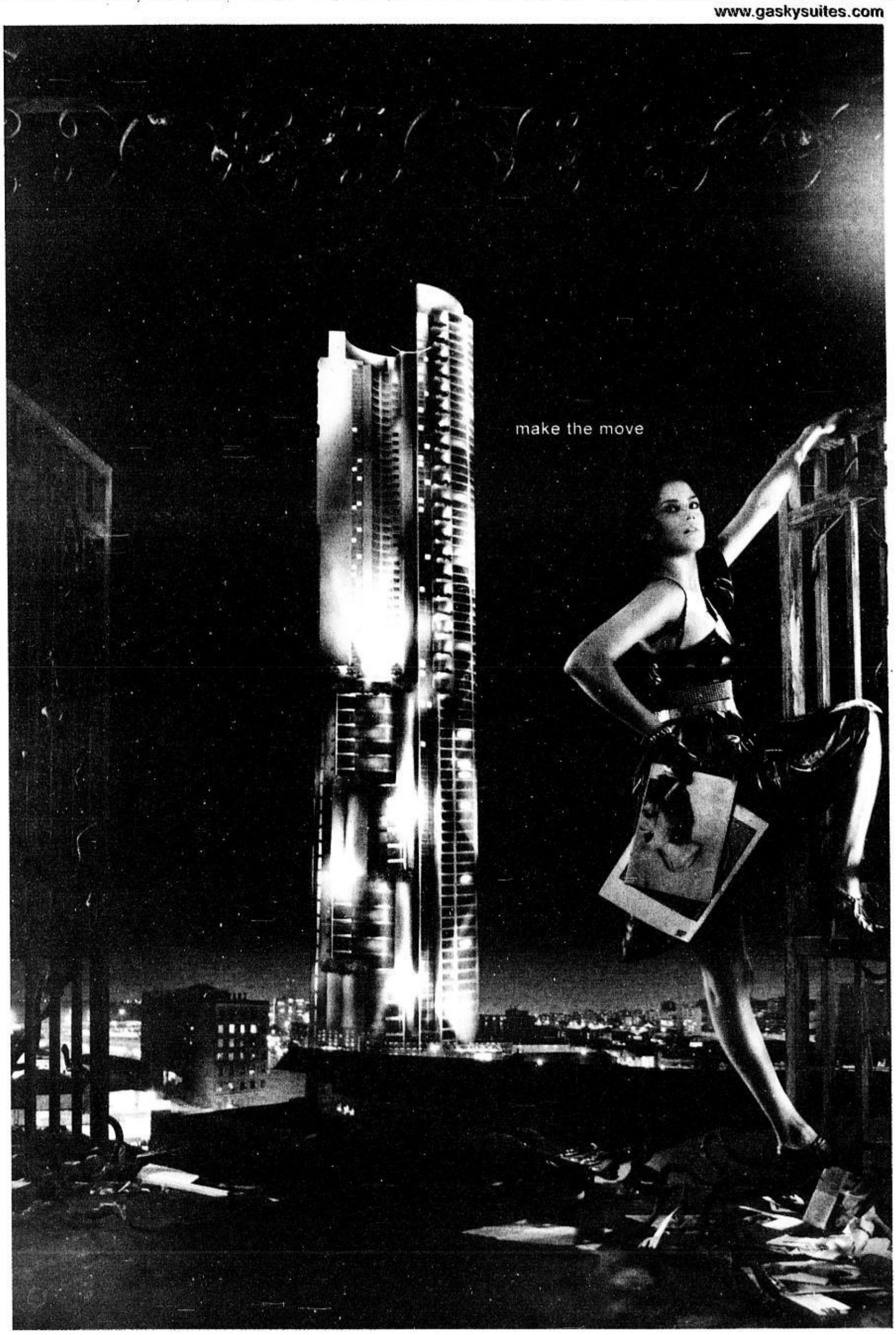

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BSP seen cutting interest rates during Dec. 20 meet

By Doris C. Dumlao

DEUTSCHE BANK SEES THE Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas slashing its benchmark interest rates further during its next policy-setting meeting on Dec. 20, but pause monetary easing in the first half of 2008.

"While we are very nervous about the inflation outlook over the next couple of months, the BSP appears to be much more sanguine," Deutsche Bank chief economist Michael Spencer said in a commentary dated Nov. 26.

This developed as the German bank overhauled its interest outlook for the United States, thus requiring a re-examination of the outlook for Asia. The bank now expects a 25-basis-point cut in the US Federal funds rate at each of the meetings of its open market committee on Dec. 11, Jan. 30 and March 18.

"We therefore expect the prospect of multiple rate cuts in the United States to lead the BSP to cut rates at its next policy meeting in December," Spencer said.

"Rising inflation is likely to keep them on hold for the first few months of 2008 at least. However, we expect inflation to be relatively stable at just below the upper limit of their inflation target band and to fall in the fourth quarter," he explained.

The economist cited the possibility of Philippine growth slowing down in 2008 than 2007. Thus, he said the BSP may take the opportunity to cut rates in the second half of next year.

Lower interest rates in the United States, unless matched by cuts in Asia, will tend to add to the pressure on Asian currencies to appreciate as the interest rate differential moves in a direction that would tend to attract fixed income investments in Asia, Spencer explained.

"Lower returns on US dollar assets will also tend to reduce the return on foreign exchange reserves, making sterilization of foreign exchange intervention more costly," he said.

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Q3 GDP: slower but stronger?

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Cielito F. Habito

AS MOST OBSERVERS HAD EXPECTED, the economy grew more slowly in the third quarter compared to the first half of the year. The third quarter National Income Accounts (NIA) data released by the government last week reported a 6.6-percent growth in gross domestic product (GDP). While this is slower than the 7.1 and 7.5 percent posted in the first two quarters, this was better than the 5.1-percent growth in the same quarter last year. In general, the data appear to suggest stronger performance for the sectors that matter more for a broader-based growth and wider employment. It remains to be seen if the still-to-be-released third-quarter data on employment will bear this out.

Slower and weaker

The economy has shown a consistent pattern of slowing down in the third quarter since 2004. Note that this pattern has been coincidental, not seasonal. This is because any seasonal influences are already taken into account in the way the growth rate is computed on a year-on-year basis, meaning, compared with the same quarter in the previous year. Other countries report their growth rates by looking at quarter-on-quarter growth, making a statistical adjustment to account for seasonal influences, and then translating the number into an annualized growth rate (i.e., roughly, by multiplying it by 4). Growth rates computed this way are more indicative of actual short-term weakening or strengthening in the economy.

The NIA report actually provides the seasonally adjusted quarter-on-quarter growth rates as well. And here, the news is not so encouraging: GDP grew a mere 0.3 percent over the past quarter, its weakest performance since 2001. This weakening is seen across the major economic sectors, with the industry sector actually contracting by 0.7 percent, the worst performance seen in the last four years. The decline in exports (-4.9 percent) was clearly the main reason for this, which in turn results from a combination of slower economies abroad (especially in the US) and the appreciation of the peso.

Stronger and weaker

Reverting to the year-on-year numbers, there are hopeful signs of more broadly beneficial growth. Foremost is the strong showing of agriculture, whose 5.6-percent growth improves on the 4.3-percent average growth posted in the first half, which was already better than the sector's historical average performance. With more than 12 million jobs directly coming from this sector (not counting jobs indirectly linked to agriculture, which are even far more than that), good agriculture performance is always good news.

There are two caveats to this good news, however. One, the sector's performance has always fluctuated widely across the quarters due to the vagaries of weather—especially now that climate change seems to have made weather patterns so much more unpredictable. Thus, one can not project an improving trend from just a quarter's (or even a few quarters') good performance. Two, the sector's latest quarter-on-quarter growth rate was actually much weaker at 1.1 percent, compared to 2.4 and 2.2 percent in the previous two quarters. Taken in this light, agriculture actually weakened relative to the last two quarters, even though it strengthened relative to its performance last year.

Steady services

The services sector also shows the same stronger/weaker performance. That is, compared to last year (5.8 percent), the 7.2-percent growth is stronger. But compared to recent quarters (8.8 and 8.4 percent), services growth has slowed down. Real estate continues to zoom at a consistent 21.6 percent, while private services, buoyed by the call center and business process outsourcing (BPO) surge, remains strong at 8.5 percent and better than last year's 6.1-percent growth.

On the other hand, communication has slowed down to a single-digit 6.2 percent after posting double-digit growth in past quarters. Are people texting each other less? Or have lower prices (e.g., 100 texts for P15) induced by strong competition simply cut the telecom companies' margins?

Firming investment

Another hopeful sign is a steady improvement in investment growth. Investment (capital formation) grew 7.5 percent year-on-year, with public construction being a somewhat less dominating influence than in recent quarters. Private construction (13.1 percent) is a much stronger contributor to investment growth this time; in the past quarter, it grew only 2.2 percent against public construction's 39.7-percent surge.

Investment in durable equipment is also picking up (3.4 percent against 1.7 percent in the first half), and has reversed its 8-quarter slide since 2005. Investments in breeding stock and orchard development also improved over last year's performance (3.6 percent versus 1.1 percent), but was slower than the past quarter's 7.4-percent growth. We need to be able to sustain and intensify these trends given the ground we lost over the past two years relative to our neighbors, who had continued to post robust investment growth even as our numbers were sliding.

So what's the verdict? I see reason enough to remove the question mark from my title above. But the challenges are clear: Take good care of agriculture, reverse the export decline and nurture investment, particularly the more problematic domestic part.

Comments welcome at chabito@ateneo.edu.

Investors seen tracking Wall St.

From page B1

verse impact on the economy."

The stock market was closed Friday due to a national holiday.

Meantime, Asian stocks continued to rally Friday after comments by Federal Reserve Chair Ben Bernanke hinting at another US interest rate cut when the Fed meets on Dec. 11.

Bernanke was quoted as saying that a resurgence in financial strains had dimmed the outlook for the US economy and the Fed would "have to remain exceptionally alert and flexible."

"Investors will also be guided by Wall Street (US stock market). It could play catch-up to regional markets (on Monday)," Liboro said.

"The Fed meeting in December will definitely be what everyone will be waiting for before making a serious commitment in these markets," Bate said.

"The market would take its cue from the direction of global equity markets. We remain buyers on weakness as we maintain our positive view on domestic equities in the coming new year," Garcia said. *Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson*

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Exporters urged to use ₱250-M promotional fund

Only ₱30M tapped so far

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE PHILIPPINE EXPORTERS CONFEDERation renewed calls for exporters to tap a P250-million fund to counter the adverse effects of a continually rising peso.

PhilExport president Sergio Ortiz-Luis Jr. urged exporters to submit projects proposals as only about P30 million of the Export Promotional Fund had been tapped so far.

The EPF was pooled from different sources—the trade and budget departments, the Bangko Sentral and the National Economic Development Authority—early this year amid the clamor of exporters for support as they reeled from the continued strengthening of the peso, which has appreciated by some 30 percent in the past two years.

Ortiz-Luis, who is also vice chair of the Export Development Council, said the agency would accept proposed projects on a first-come-first-served basis.

He said the EPF had penetrated only a small fraction of the country's 39 exporting industry associations and Philexport's 19 regional and provincial chapters.

"We must be able to allocate the funds soon so that the money will not be returned to the national government," he said.

He urged them to make full use of the funds in measurable projects that would enhance their ability to compete and somehow help them overcome the negative effects of a strengthening peso.

However, the Philexport chief said individual exporting companies did not qualify for funding.

Ortiz-Luis said the EPF screening committee had approved funding for 10 out of at least 20 proposed projects as of last week, which ranged from P1 million to P5 million.

3 Travel Cafe outlets to open in Manila

THE DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM announced three new branches of Travel Café Philippines would be opened in Makati and Pasay to serve as showcase operations for investors interested in this pioneering concept.

Tourism Secretary Joseph Ace Durano said in an interview that the franchise for all three new stores were granted to the same group behind the first TCP outlet in Tokyo, and which had entered into a joint venture with catering firm Makati Skyline.

"The first of the three is in Greenbelt 5 and would open on Dec. 18," Durano said. "Another one would be at the SM Mall of Asia and a third in the SMX Convention Center, both expected to open in January."

He explained that as "showrooms," the new stores would be fully-operational cafés but would serve as models that would be available for potential franchisees to view.

So far, new franchisees include those that would open TCPs in New Delhi, San Francisco in California, Seoul and Shanghai.

The official said the cafés in India and the United States would open in 2008 while those in South Korea and China would have to wait a little longer as the franchisees were still looking for locations that were acceptable to the DoT.

"We have been receiving positive feedback and inquiries from interested investors," Durano said. "But when they ask to see an example, we could only point to the Tokyo café, which is an expensive trip and out-of-the-way for some."

Launched in 2006, TCP in Tokyo was developed under a concept that consulting firm Francorp Philippines designed.

"This was a world's first in terms of integrating the businesses of a café and of travel," Durano said. "New Zealand has adopted this model."

Also, he said TCP was an innovative and cost-effective means for the DoT to promote the country with limited resources.

"Unlike the traditional and seasonal advertising media of television and magazines, TCP is all-year-round, quite experiential and a lot cheaper," he added.

Durano said the new franchise would be heavy on featuring destinations—by way of items in the menu, naming of the foods and the themes in the different areas of the café—as well as "very strong" on the travel components.

TCP has travel concierge services, which picks up on interest whetted by the menu. *Ronnel W. Domingo*

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Fuzion GLS Sport	1,150,000	130,000	87,657	59,995	47,837	34,090	27,281	23,485

Model	SRP	DP	12	18	24	36	48	60	72
Lancer 1.6 GLX M/T	695,000	85,000	53,494	36,613	29,186	20,799	16,644	14,328	12,903
Lancer 1.5 GLS CVT	768,000	90,000	58,539	40,066	31,947	22,766	18,219	15,684	14,124

Model	SRP	DP	12	18	24	36	48	60	72
Adventure GLX - Diesel	773,000	70,000	58,740	40,204	32,059	22,847	18,283	15,739	14,174
Adventure GLS Sport - Diesel	840,000	70,000	64,115	43,882	34,989	24,934	19,954	17,177	15,469
Adventure Super Sport - Diesel	883,000	120,000	67,520	46,213	36,845	26,257	21,012	18,088	16,289
Adventure GLS Sport Gas A/T	893,000	120,000	68,414	46,825	37,331	26,603	21,289	18,327	16,504

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Some shares to be sold to public, others to 'cornerstone investor'

By Abigail L. Ho

THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE expects the privatization of the government's 60-percent stake in PNOC Exploration Corp. to generate at least P6 billion.

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said there were no definite plans yet on how to go about PNOC-EC's privatization, but this should take place within 2008.

The expected proceeds from the privatization plan, he said, were based on estimates made some months ago and this could be higher now.

PNOC-EC president Rafael del Pilar ealier said the state firm's privatization should be completed in the first quarter of 2008.

He said PNOC-EC, parent firm Philippine National Oil Co. and financial advisers Citibank and ATR Kim Eng were now studying how to structure the firm's privatization.

Considering the strength of the stock market, he said some of the shares to be privatized would be sold to the public through additional listing. PNOC-EC is already listed on the Philippine Stock Exchange.

Part of the shares up for privatization would be sold to a "cornerstone investor," similar to the privatization method adopted by PNOC Energy Development Corp., he said.

He said the specific sizes of the additional offer and the block sale had yet to be finalized.

Roadshows, however, were scheduled for late January to early February. These would be held in Hong Kong, Singapore, London, New York and Paris.

"Our advisers are now conducting due diligence. We are having our reserves certified because we need to have certification from a third party. We're in the process of valuing the company," he said.

PNOC-EC has stakes in nine service contracts, including a 10-percent share in the Malampaya Deep Water Gas-to-Power project in offshore Palawan.

According to the proposed timetable for the secondary offering, drawing up the privatization plan and the valuation would take around two weeks, with the conduct of a due diligence audit and the acquisition of stockholders approval to take another six weeks.

Applying for the sale of new shares, getting the necessary regulatory approvals, pre-marketing, conducting a management roadshow, allocating to international investors, and the listing of the shares will be completed in another 14 weeks.

The block sale should be done soon after.

N. Mindanao eyes 25% rise in bangus output

By Amy R. Remo

THE BUREAU OF FISHERIES AND Aquatic Resources is eyeing a 25-percent increase in *bangus* production in Region 10 next year, following the opening of the first government-operated milkfish hatchery in Sagay, Camiguin.

BFAR National Director Malcolm I. Sarmiento Jr. said this hatchery was third of the four interlinked facilities to be established in the region to develop the bangus industry in Northern Mindanao.

"Next year, we expect to start the groundwork for the construction of a P10-million fish processing plant, as negotiations are already underway," Sarmiento added.

"We now see the full spectrum of bangus production in locations that are strategic to each other," Sarmiento said.

He explained that BFAR constructed a regional milkfish breeding center in Benoni, Mahino, for the bangus egg production; a center for hatching of eggs and rearing into fry and fingerling at the Sagay Hatchery, and fish cages for marketable size of bangus at the Mariculture Park in Balingasag, Misamis Oriental. The next will be a fish processing plant.

BFAR noted that once all the facilities are in place, Region 10 is expecting to generate at least 1,110 jobs.

ENERGY Secretary Angelo Reyes (left) confers the Distinguished Fellow Award to business tycoon Lucio C. Tan during the 25th Conference of the Asean Federation of Engineering Organizations in Cebu City, as the taipan's wife, Carmen, (center) looks on. Tan, a chemical engineer, was cited by the association for successfully applying his technical know-how and engineering expertise in transforming his fledgling chemical manufacturing and trading firm in the early '60s into the mammoth business conglomerate that it is today.

Forex inflows likely to sustain 10% growth

By Doris C. Dumlao

BANCO DE ORO—EPCI, THE country's biggest bank, expects foreign exchange remittances to the Philippines sustaining a 10-percent growth next year to hit $15.4 billion despite a slowdown in the deployment of new workers.

BDO chief strategist Jonathan Ravelas projected that the number of new workers deployed overseas next year would rise by 6.5 percent to about 1.21 million.

For this year, money sent home by overseas Filipino workers was seen to hit $14 billion, up by 10 percent from last year while new deployment was estimated to grow by 7 percent year-on-year.

Ravelas said about 10 percent of the remittances from overseas Filipinos were still being sent to the country through informal channels.

The United States was cited as the biggest source of overseas employment for Filipinos at 42 percent, followed by the Middle East and Asia with 21 percent each, while Europe had a share of 11 percent.

In terms of remittance volume, the US was still noted to be the biggest contributor with a 59-percent share followed by Middle East and Europe with 13 percent each and Asia with 11 percent.

Money sent home by overseas Filipino workers through banks rose by 12.4 percent year-on-year in September to $1.1 billion. This brought the total OFW remittances generated by the Philippines for the nine-month period to $10.5 billion, 15 percent higher than year-ago level, according to the latest report of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

Foreign exchange remittances largely from OFWs contributed to the sharp appreciation of the peso, which has emerged as Asia's best performing currency so far this year.

From a stop-gap measure initiated by the government to curb unemployment in the 1970s, overseas employment has developed into a vital industry generating foreign exchange in the amount exceeding foreign investment inflows for the Philippines.

Over the last 10 years, remittances from overseas Filipinos had grown at a compounded annual rate of 11 percent. It accounted for about 10 percent of the total economic output.

GSIS nets ₱35B from Jan to Sept

Pension fund's earnings up 20% from last year's ₱29.2B

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

STATE PENSION FUND Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) has recorded a hefty 20-percent growth in its net earnings for the first nine months of 2007 to P35 billion from P29.2 billion in the same period last year.

The pension fund said revenues from investments—which include stocks and government securities—grew 29.7 percent to P15.3 billion from P11.8 billion.

"The GSIS has been reaping the benefits of investment initiatives that we have put in place," GSIS president and general manager Winston F. Garcia said in a statement. "The dynamic local market has fueled our earnings growth so far."

The GSIS earlier tapped banking giants Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co., Bank of the Philippine Islands and Banco de Oro Universal Bank to manage P6 billion in funds for a period of three years starting this year.

The three banks were assigned to be the local fund managers of the GSIS with a mandate of P2 billion each.

Gains of P10.4 billion from sales of stocks were also recorded during the first three quarters of the year from P756.3 million in the same period last year.

The GSIS has been an active participant in the local equities market. Among the blue chip stocks the GSIS has sold so far this year were those of San Miguel Corp., Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. and Ayala Corp.

All these contributed to the 13.8-percent increase in gross revenues of the GSIS from January to September 2007, from last year's P57.4 billion to P65.3 billion this year.

Revenues from insurance also grew 5.9 percent to P36.04 billion from P34.03 billion, while revenues from loans receivables increased by 18 percent to P13.31 billion from P11.28 billion.

Total assets increased by 5.8 percent to P432.5 billion during the first nine months of 2007, from P408.8 billion in the same period last year.

The GSIS has also started to explore investment opportunities overseas for its $1-billion Global Investment Program (GIP). For this purpose, it has tapped ING Investment Management and Credit Agricole Asset Management (Singapore) Ltd., as fund managers. Citibank NA will be its global custodian in charge of income collection and transaction settlement of funds.

GARCIA

The GIP is consistent with the good investment practices of public pension funds like the California Public Employees' Retirement System and the California State Teachers' Retirement System. It is also the same direction taken by National Social Security Fund of China, the Government Pension Fund of Thailand and the Employees' Provident Fund of Malaysia.

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PELAC Dollar Bond Fund	1.2997	1.3040
PELAC Global Bond Fund	1.2072	1.2062
PELAC Peso Fixed Income Fund	1.0598	1.0314
PELAC Peso Equity Fund	1.3159	1.3024
PELAC Balanced Fund	0.9865	0.9777

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Philamlife Equity Fund	1.9636	1.9338
Philamlife Fixed Income Fund	1.3323	1.3308
Philamlife Balanced Fund	1.0282	1.0174
Philamlife Dollar Bond Fund	1.3797	1.3777
Philamlife Global Bond Fund	1.2131	1.2111

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RP officials bent on pushing debt talks with China

By Michelle V. Remo

THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT HAS NO intention of canceling its loan discussions with China, despite the controversy that marred the $329-million deal for the establishment of a national broadband network (NBN), according to the National Economic and Development Authority.

Although the NBN deal is no longer being pursued, talks with the Chinese government over possible financing of other development projects are now ongoing, said Augusto Santos, acting Neda director general.

"Our ODA (official development assistance) with China is not affected by the ZTE issue," Santos told reporters last week. "The Philippines will continue to utilize Chinese ODAs."

The NBN deal was marred with allegations of corruption involving Philippine government officials and ZTE Corp., the Chinese firm that supposedly acquired the contract to implement the project.

Critics of the NBN project alleged that the deal was rushed, and that ZTE's bid offer was inferior to that of its competitors'. Amsterdam Holdings Inc. (AHI) and the US-based Arescom Inc. reportedly offered to build a similar network for only $242 million and $135 million, respectively.

Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos allegedly brokered the deal between the Chinese firm and the Philippine government. He was accused of colluding with ZTE officials.

The NBN project would have been funded by the Philippine government using a loan from the Chinese government. The implementation of the project was stalled when allegations of corruption prompted the Senate to initiate an inquiry into the deal.

Santos said the controversy surrounding the NBN project should not hamper talks between the Philippine and Chinese governments over the implementation of other projects.

The Philippines is seeking loans from the Chinese government to fund several projects, including the establishment of a dam in Nueva Ecija, the construction of an international airport in Clark, Pampanga, and the development of hybrid rice by farmers from Mindanao.

"We are not veering away from these loans," Santos said. "Bilateral loans are beneficial because these are cheaper than other ... multilateral loans."

Bilateral loans are granted by one government to another, while multilateral loans are given by foreign lending institutions like the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank.

Santos said that the Chinese government only charges an interest rate of one percent per annum for its loans to the Philippines. Loans from the World Bank or the ADB, meanwhile, carry with them interest rates of 4 to 6 percent.

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Investment Funds	Net Asset Value Per Unit (NAVPU) as of 11/21/07	as of 11/28/07
Philamlife Equity Fund	1.8676	1.8815
Philamlife Fixed Income Fund	1.3357	1.3680
Philamlife Balanced Fund	0.9906	1.0001
Philamlife Dollar Bond Fund	1.3767	1.3720
Philamlife Global Bond Fund	1.2099	1.2108

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Mindanao seen to be ideal for biodiesel component

By Abigail L. Ho

PNOC ALTERNATIVE FUELS CORP. is set to propagate jatropha, for use as biodiesel feedstock, in Mindanao.

According to an official of PNOC-AFC, a subsidiary of the Philippine National Oil Co., Mindanao appears to be the best and most suitable place for growing jatropha, mostly because of the climate and the large tracts of idle land available for use as plantations.

"The Food and Agricultural Organization, in its recent study, assessed the potential of jatropha production as a biodiesel feedstock," PNOC-AFC chair Renato Velasco said in a statement. "The results showed that we have sufficient arable lands and favorable climatic conditions to ensure the large feedstock production every year, and Mindanao is found to be the most suitable area.

"We have already started planting jatropha in Cagayan de Oro and we aim to establish an aggregate amount of at least 700,000 hectares of jatropha plantations all over the country, bulk of which will be in Mindanao."

While encouraging Mindanao farmers to go into jatropha production, he said the aim of PNOC-AFC's jatropha propagation program was not to make farmers shift from producing food crops to planting jatropha.

"We want the farmers to continue growing rice, sugar and others," Velasco explained. "What we intend to do is give farmers additional income by planting jatropha (on idle lands)."

He said jatropha production was a viable livelihood option for farmers as this required minimal supervision and would not compete with food crops for land.

Idle tracts of land—ones that would not be suitable for food crops—could be used in jatropha cultivation.

As for concerns on the use of jatropha as biodiesel feedstock, PNOC-AFC, together with relevant government agencies and the academe, are conducting wide-scale scientific work to discover which variety of jatropha would be best for widespread propagation, Velasco said.

"The Philippines is capable of producing jatropha biodiesel that can pass international standards," Velasco said. "What is more important to note is that we used seeds from the local jatropha variety."

ALL SMILES
Teresita Sy-Coson of Banco de Oro is flanked by Oscar M. Lopez of First Holdings (left) and Manolo M. Lopez of Meralco, during the signing of the Floating Rate Corporate Notes Facility Agreement at the Palm Grove, Rockwell Club, Makati City. MANDY NAVASERO / PDI

PSALM still optimistic it can meet 50% privatization target for 2007

By Abigail L. Ho

THE POWER SECTOR ASsets and Liabilities Management Corp. is confident that it can still meet its 50-percent privatization target this year with the sale of the 192.5-megawatt (MW) Palinpinon geothermal and 146.5-MW Panay diesel-fired power plant package on Dec. 5.

PSALM president Jose Ibazeta said the agency was also on track to meet its 2008 target of privatizing 70 percent of the National Power Corp.'s Luzon and Visayas capacities.

"We welcome the move by the (Joint Congressional Power Commission) to scrutinize the privatization process, but we need to remain focused on our goal—50 percent by 2007 and 70 percent by 2008," Ibazeta said in a statement.

"I have already given my reply to the JCPC on the allegations of conflict of interest. The 339-MW Palinpinon geothermal-Panay diesel power plant package is next, and the fact that prospective bidders are undeterred by the recent issues is a clear indicator of their confidence in our process."

On the case filed against PSALM by La Costa Development Corp., one of the entities that failed to prequalify for the auction of the 25-year National Transmission Corp. concession, Ibazeta said the case was best left for the court to decide.

On allegations that the the Aboitiz group and the President's brother, Diosdado "Buboy" Macapagal Jr., an investment banker and former finance undersecretary, also had interests in the Transco concession, he said there was nothing in the documents required from prospective bidders that linked the Aboitizes or Macapagal to the Transco bid.

PSALM has set Dec. 5 as the deadline for the submission of final bids for the Palinpinon geothermal-Panay diesel plant package.

The sale hangs in the balance, however, as the JCPC has yet to take specific action on the steam sale agreement (SSA)—the contract that will assure the winning bidder of steady fuel for the plant—to be attached to the plant.

PSALM vice president for asset management and electricity trading Froilan Tampinco had earlier said that the JCPC should decide whether to approve or not the SSA that PNOC Energy Development Corp. submitted to the congressional body last year.

Spanish firm investing . . . From page B1

competitive.

Meanwhile, PADCC will assist AME and mobilize the resources of the DA's agencies and bureaus, as well as financial institutions, to help realize Bionor's investment plans.

"Bionor's main thrust is to develop feedstock plantations worldwide using raw materials that do not compete with the food sector and do not lead to deforestation," Yap said.

For this reason, Bionor is tapping jatropha, a non-food crop, to support the requirements of its refineries, he added.

Bionor is currently operating two biodiesel plants in Spain and Italy with a combined output of 125,000 metric tons.

It is constructing an additional five plants in Spain and Brazil, which will add 900,000 MT of capacity in 2008.

By the first quarter of 2009, Bionor is expected to have a combined capacity of more than a million tons of methyl ester.

Last January, President Macapagal-Arroyo signed into law RA 9367 or the Biofuels Law, which aims to ease the country's dependence on imported, dollar-draining and pollution-generating energy sources.

The law has made the blending of ethanol and coco biodiesel in petroleum products mandatory.

WB unit prods gov't . . . From page B1

Secretary Margarito Teves.

The key areas referred to by the IFC included "starting a business," "property registration," and "ability to access credit."

In the IFC's "Doing Business Report 2008," the Philippines ranked 133rd out of 178 countries on the ease of doing business index. The country slipped from the previous year's rank of 130th.

IFC said the slippage did not mean a worsening of the Philippine climate for business, but improvement in the investment environment by other countries.

"While things have not changed much in the Philippines, several countries have improved, which affects the relative ranking of the Philippines, making the imperative for reform even more important even just to maintain one's level of competitiveness," IFC said.

The IFC said that the government needed to focus its reforms on the three key areas as these have a big impact on the country's rankings.

Should the government be able to institute needed reforms in the area of "starting a business," the country will have a potential of improving its ranking by 12 notches.

IFC noted that in the Philippines, a relatively higher minimum capital is needed to put up a business, at 6.9 percent of per capita income. IFC also said that anyone wanting to start a business in the Philippines would have to go through 15 procedures, much higher than the average of 8 in the East Asia Pacific region.

A suggested reform is to enhance the government's portal for business registration, which will also accommodate registration for health and insurance of employees. The IFC also said that companies to be established need not comply with a minimum capital requirements.

In the area of registering a property, the IFC said that implementing reforms in these areas would help the Philippines' ranking improve by 4 places.

"There are too many procedures (to register a property): 8 procedures compared with the regional average of 5, China has 3, Thailand 2, Vietnam 4, and Indonesia 5," IFC said.

The IFC said an ideal way of resolving the problem was to consolidate all government agencies concerned with property registration into one entity. But because such a move would take time, the IFC said the government could cut short the processes, such as by eliminating the notarization requirements or allowing the registrar to notarize deeds.

In the area of access to credit, the IFC said the Philippines may improve its ranking by 15 places if the suggested reforms were implemented. One major recommendation was for the passage of a law establishing a credit information bureau.

The IFC said that the bureau should have payment history of potential borrowers and that the government should allow borrowers as well to inspect the business background of lenders.

In the Doing Business Report, the Philippines ranked 144th in the area of "starting a business," 86th in the area of "registering property," and 97th in the areas of "getting credit."

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1,400 sqm.	P 1,260,000
1,500 sqm.	P 1,350,000

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L.A 390 sqm.
FOREST HILLS, Brgy. Isidro
Min. Bid Price: P 1,105,650

ATB_ANT003 RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A 205 sqm.
VALLEY GOLF SUBD., Mayamot
Min. Bid Price: P430,500

CALOOCAN

ATB_CAL004 COMMERCIAL BLDG
L.A 178.50 sqm. FA. 305.82
M.H. Del Pilar St., GRACE PARK
Min. Bid Price: P12,500,000

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Bo. Pamplona
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Brgy. Tambo

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333.20 sqm.	P 8,200,000
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MC KINLEY TOWER CONDO
Pacific Ave., Asiaworld City
Brgy. Tambo

Floor Area	Min. Bid Price
150.21 sqm.	P 5,999,691
152.59 sqm.	P 6,097,497
159.60 sqm.	P 6,377,616
145.59 sqm.	P 7,232,902
145.59 sqm.	P 6,053,632
150.21 sqm.	P 6,326,845
145.59 sqm.	P 6,132,250
159.60 sqm	P 6,722,352

ATB_PRQ027 RESIDENTIAL BLDG.
L.A 240.00 sqm.
Emerald St., SEVERINA DIAMOND SUBDIVISION
Min. Bid Price: P1,500,000

PASIG

ATB_PSG028 OFC CONDO UNIT
F.A 128.62 sqm.
PARC CHATEAU CONDOMINIUM
cor. Onynx & Garnet St.,
Ortigas Complex
Min. Bid Price: P 4,051,530

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ATB_QC029 TOWNHOUSE UNIT
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Lot Area	Min. Bid Price
57 sqm. (2 units available)	P 512,400
76sqm.	P 580,800

ATB_QC030 HOUSE & LOT
L.A 970 sqm.
Horseshoe Drive, HORSESHOE VILL.
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RIZAL

ATB_RZL034 HOUSE & LOT
L.A.150.00 sqm.
Wellington Ave., EASTVILLE SUBD.
Min. Bid Price: P 2,000,000

ATB_RZL035 RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A 204 sqm.
VILLAGE EAST SUBD., Binangonan
Min. Bid Price: P204,000

SAN JUAN

ATB_SJ036 TOWNHOUSE UNIT
L.A 62.12 sqm. FA. 220 sqm.
BRGY., LITTLE BAGUIO
Min. Bid Price : P4,200,000

TAGUIG

ATB_TAG037 COMMERCIAL LOT
L.A 330 sqm.
Quezon St., BRGY. WAWA
Min. Bid Price: P8,000,000

LUZON

BATANGAS

ATB_BAT038 RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A 647 sqm.
PACIFIC HEIGHTS., SUBD.
Brgy. Tamayo, Calaca
Min. Bid Price: P 2,264,500

ATB_BAT040 HOUSE & LOT
L.A 353sqm.
STO. NIÑO VILLAGE, Bo Libjo
Min. Bid Price: P3,873,600

BULACAN

ATB_BUL042 FEEDMILL
LA. 2000 sqm.
Bo. Balungao, Calumpit
Min. Bid Price: Pls. Call Us

ATB_BUL043 HOUSE & LOT
LA. 450 sqm.
Pob. Pandi Bigaa
Min. Bid Price: Pls. Call Us

ATB_BUL044 AGRI LOT
LA. 2,128 sqm.
Brgy. Cupang Pandi
Min. Bid Price: Pls. Call Us

CAVITE

ATB_CVT006 RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A. 150 sqm. (2 lots available)
SOUTH PLAINS EXEC. VILLAGE,
Dasmariñas
Min. Bid Price: P 330,000

ATB_CVT007 TOWNHOUSE UNIT
L.A 50 sqm. FA. 50 sqm.
REGENCY EXEC. TOWNHOMES,
Dasmariñas
Min. Bid Price: P 560,000

ATB_CVT008 RESIDENTIAL LOT
METROPOLIS GREEN,
Brgy. Mangahan, Gen. Trias

Lot Area	Min. Bid Price
157 sqm	P 235,500
150 sqm	P 225,000
150 sqm	P 225,000

ATB_CVT009 VACANT LOT
EAGLE RIDGE GOLF & RESIDENTIAL ESTATE, General Trias

Lot Area	Min. Bid Price
427 sqm.	P 939,400
618 sqm.	P 1,359,600

ATB_CVT010 RESIDENTIAL UNIT
Marycris Homes Phase 2,
Alapan, Imus

Lot Area	Min. Bid Price
36 sqm. (3 lots available)	P 230,000
36 sqm.	P 250,000
50 sqm.	P 300,000
56 sqm	P 230,000

ATB_CVT011 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 63 sqm. (2 units available)
Ilang-Ilang St., SUNNYDALE -THE GARDEN VILLAGE Phase 1,
Bukandala Imus
Min. Bid Price: P 450,000

ATB_CVT012 RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A 84 sqm.
EMILIO AGUINALDO HIGHWAY,
Anabu, Imus
Min. Bid Price : P 420,000

ATB_CVT013 RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A 180.00 sqm.
BRGY. BAYAN LUMA, Imus
Min. Bid Price: P 270,000

ISABELA

ATB_ISA045 RESIDENTIAL LOT
LA. 11,250 sqm.
San Isidro, Ilagan
Min. Bid Price: Pls. Call Us

ATB_ISA046 RESIDENTIAL LOT
LA. 15,533 sqm.
Brgy. Arabiat , Echaque
Min. Bid Price: Pls. Call Us

ATB_ISA047 RESIDENTIAL LOT
LA. 7,174 sqm.
Brgy. Tarinsing
Min. Bid Price: Pls. Call Us

ATB_ISA048 RESIDENTIAL LOT
LA. 6,000 sqm.
San Manuel, Brgy. Poblacion
Min. Bid Price: Pls. Call Us

ATB_ISA049 COMM'L/RSD'L BLDG.
LA. 531 sqm.
Lino Barrera & Turingan St., Pob.
Min. Bid Price: Pls. Call Us

ATB_ISA050 RSDL LOT W/PIGGERY
LA. 26,000 sqm.
Baluarte/Bo. Rd. Santiago
Min. Bid Price: Pls. Call Us

ATB_ISA051 5-STY OFFICE BLDG.
LA. 11,277 sqm.
Maharlika Highway
Min. Bid Price: Pls. Call Us

ATB_ISA052 RESIDENTIAL LOT
LA. 3,299 sqm.
Purok Banyaga, Brgy. Pob., Alicia
Min. Bid Price: Pls. Call Us

LAGUNA

ATB_LGN014 COMMERCIAL LOT
L.A 152.00 sqm
Bonifacio St., CANLALAY, Biñan
Min. Bid Price: P 3,060,000

ATB_LGN015 RESIDENTIAL COMP.
L.A 1,154 sqm.
Kalantas St., Brgy. Looc, CALAMBA
Min. Bid Price : P 3,000,000

ATB_LGN016 RESIDENTIAL LOTS
L.A 14,185 sqm.
(w/in Green Valley Subd.)
Along Palawan St., Brgy. San Francisco, SAN PABLO CITY
Min. Bid Price: P7,357,100.

ATB_LGN017 HOUSE & LOT
Brgy. San Francisco,
SAN PABLO CITY

Lot Area	Min. Bid Price
258 sqm.	P 4,156,000
1,808 sqm.	P 18,000,000

ATB_LGN018 2-STRY APARTMENT
L.A 734.00 sqm.
DE LEON COMPOUND
Balibago, Sta Rosa
Min. Bid Price: P2,5000,000

ATB_LGN019 COMMERCIAL BLDG.
L.A 150.00 sqm.
PULONG STA. CRUZ, Sta. Rosa
Min. Bid Price : P1,350,000

TAGAYTAY

ATB_TGY039 RESIDENTIAL LOT
Canyon Woods Phases 2 &3B,
Brgy. San Gregorio Laurel

Lot Area	Min. Bid Price
296 sqm.	P 1,598,400
300 sqm.	P 1,620,000
349 sqm.	P 1,884,600
411 sqm.	P 2,219,400
498 sqm.	P 2,689,200
510 sqm.	P 2,754,000
536 sqm.	P 2,894,400
568 sqm.	P 3,067,200

ATB_TGY041 RESIDENTIAL BLDG.
L.A 270.00 sqm. FA. 180 sqm.
Yumol St., TAGAYTAY COUNTRY HOMES 4, Brgy. Asisan
Min. Bid Price: P 2,295,000

MINDANAO

GENERAL SANTOS

ATB_GSC053 INDUSTRIAL LOT
L.A 24,393 sqm.
National Highway, Km Post 166
BRGY. TAMBLER
Min. Bid Price: Please Call Us

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Nomura ups RP growth forecast

By Michelle V. Remo

JAPANESE INVESTMENT BANK NOMURA has raised its economic growth target for the Philippines from 6.1 to 6.4 percent this year, citing the increased government spending for infrastructure and higher consumer demand.

In its latest analysis of the Philippine economy, Nomura also said the Philippines would likely maintain a decent growth over the medium term or until 2009.

"Despite growing risk of short-term slowdown in external demand, public infrastructure investment is likely to contribute to stable economic growth toward 2009," Nomura said.

The government, in efforts to put its fiscal house in order, has implemented several measures to shore up revenue collection and balance the budget next year.

The Philippine government's spending for infrastructure has hovered around 3 percent of gross domestic product.

Finance officials said the government wanted to increase the figure to 5 percent over the medium term to be at par with its neighbors.

Government spending for infrastructure grew by close to 28 percent in the first three quarters of the year from that of the same period a year ago, officials said.

The National Economic and Development Authority partly credited the robust growth in government spending for the better-than-expected performance of the overall economy as of the third quarter.

"In 2008 and 2009, we expected the Philippine economy to be driven by government-led infrastructure investments," Nomura said. The bank cited President Macapagal-Arroyo's "Super Regions Plan," which includes several major infrastructure projects.

The government announced last week that the country grew 6.6 percent in the third quarter from the same period last year.

This brought the cumulative growth for the first three quarters of the year to 7.1 percent, beating the government's full-year forecast of between 6.1 and 6.7 percent.

Nomura said that despite the higher-than-target economic growth, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas still has some more room to ease its monetary policy.

Nomura said that the economy might experience a slowdown in the remaining months of the year due to the weakening US economy, which could drag down Philippine exports.

The United States is the Philippines' biggest export market, accounting for about 17 percent of the country's total exports.

The investment bank said a 7-percent average growth, therefore, was unlikely for the full year, although the economy could still post a decent growth of 6.4 percent.

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2008 big year for mobile TV, telcos say

By Riza T. Olchondra

THE MARKET FOR MOBILE TV IS EXpected to surge next year, sparked by a slew of high-profile sports events, according to the country's leading telcos, Smart Communications Inc. and Globe Telecom Inc.

"Of course we see the opportunities, we agree that big sports events increase awareness of mobile TV," Smart spokesperson Ramon Isberto said.

"Our mobile TV offering via 3.5G is now working and we don't see any problems with usage if (hypothetically) digital broadcasts of the Summer Olympic Games would be opened up for our subscribers," Globe spokesperson Jones Campos said.

Earlier, AFP reported that European Union telecom ministers see next year as a crucial time for promoting mobile TV because of major sports events, such as the European Football Championship and the Summer Olympic Games.

A 2006 study by GfK Technology found that the three most popular forms of content on mobile TV are news and weather, sports and music videos.

Some 65 percent of respondents worldwide said they would watch news and weather, 56 percent preferred sports and 46 percent wanted music videos.

Globally, nearly 500 million people will watch TV on their mobile devices by the end of 2011, according to a study by IMS Research published last year.

In the Philippines, the addressable market in the next few months would be less than a million but this number would surge when more content and providers become available.

But first, mobile TV players are waiting for guidelines from the National Telecommunication Commission (NTC) before embarking on their respective campaigns.

Last year, the NTC had picked Digital Video Broadcasting-Handheld (DVB-H) as the national standard. But when former Commissioner Ronald Solis was replaced by Abraham Abesamis in December last year, the regulator said it was going to consider other standards.

Current Commissioner Ruben Canobas, who was appointed this year, decided to push through with the review.

America's Advanced Television Systems Committee and Japan's Integrated Services Digital Broadcast running on the Digital Technology Television platform are among the technologies being considered by the commission.

'Pinoy biotek' goods now ready for sale

By Amy R. Remo

FILIPINO BIOTECHNOLOGY products prepared for commercial sale by the University of the Philippines-Los Baños may soon hit supermarket shelves.

Last week, UPLB Chancellor Rey Luis Velasco formally unveiled "Pinoy Biotek" products to mark the weeklong celebration of the National Biotechnology Week.

Among the products ready for commercial release are bio-organic fertilizers to enhance growth of various crops and high-value vegetables; personal healthcare products; supplements for health and wellness and animal vaccines.

The unveiling of the "Pinoy Biotek" products formally opened a three-day exhibit at UPLB, showcasing these biotechnology products developed by Filipino scientists from the national government and private research institutes.

UPLB, which has some 200 different technologies and products, is the country's hub of agricultural science and technology, as well as agri-biotechnology research and development.

These new products and technologies aim to increase yield and reduce farm costs and make the various agriculture subsectors, particularly crop and livestock, competitive.

Given its potential contribution to Philippine agriculture, Velasco said the UPLB was shifting its focus from basic to high-end agriculture through modern biotechnology.

At the exhibit, the Institute of Plant Breeding also revealed its latest disease-free planting materials for traditional crops such as cassava, papaya, tomato, abaca, corn and avocado.

It added that these were produced through tissue culture.

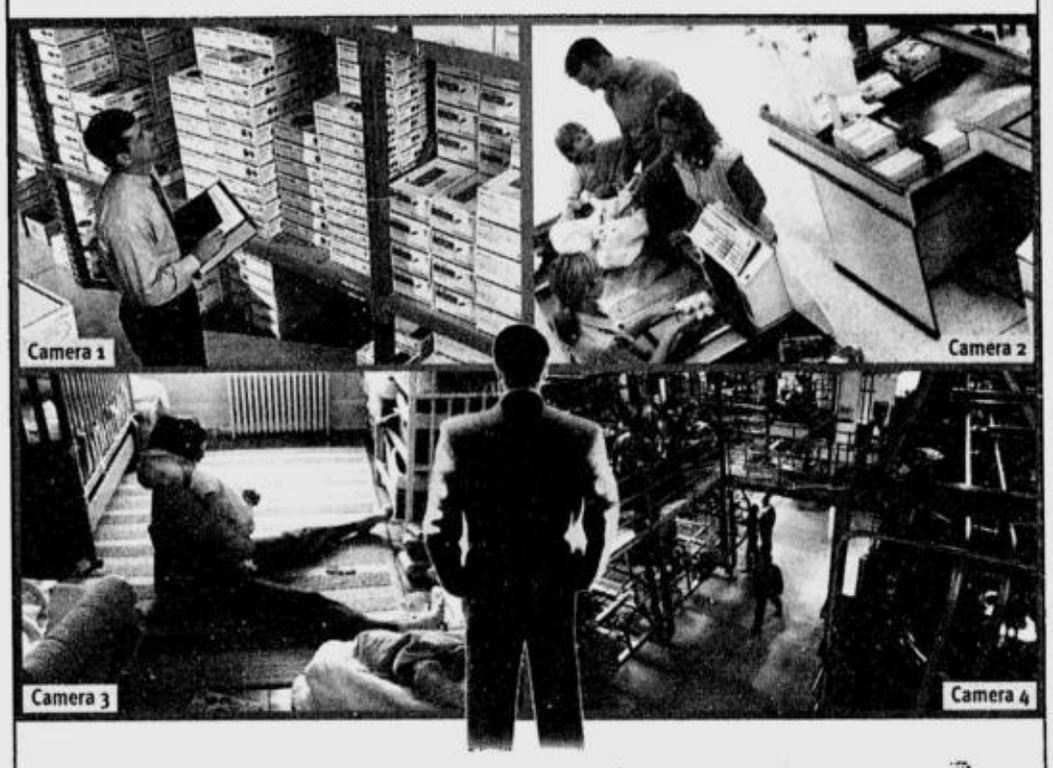
IPB is also about to introduce to the market other products such as the multivirus resistant tomato; papaya resistant to the ring spot virus; and pest-resistant eggplant.

Meanwhile, Ida F. Dalmacio, director of UPLB's National Institute of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology, said the department was also "engaged in extensive research and development for biofuels production."

These include studies on possible plant sources for biofuel such as jatropha and sweet sorghum.

UPLB is also pushing to establish a center where it can consolidate all the biotech research institutes within the UP system, as part of its technology and product commercialization proposal to sustain ongoing research and development.

See There
When You Can't Be There.



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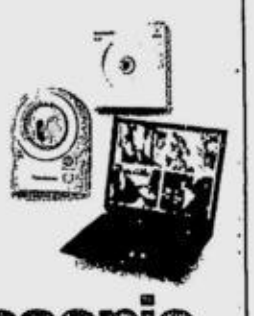

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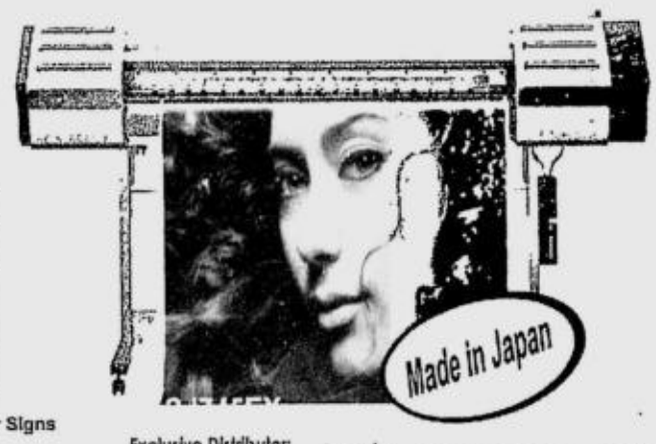

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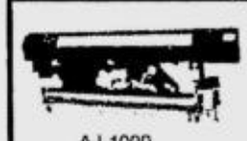
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DOH Sec. Francisco Duque III (3rd from right) is flanked by (L-R): Cheryl Ann Serrano, Sanofi-Aventis Communications Manager; Zenny Ponce, Sanofi-Aventis Regulatory Affairs Director; Mito Raagas, Winthrop Business Development Director; Chiles Mendez, Winthrop Marketing Manager; and Dr. May Pagunsan, Sanofi-Aventis Associate Medical Director.

Winthrop generics launched

To improve access to quality and affordable medicines to millions of Filipinos, the Sanofi-Aventis Group, one of the world's leading pharmaceutical companies, recently launched its generics arm, Winthrop Pharmaceuticals Philippines, Inc.

Winthrop is driven by a commitment to contribute to the reduction of healthcare cost. "The Winthrop brand is in response to the public clamor for more accessible, affordably-priced quality medicines," says Mito Raagas, Winthrop's Business Development Director.

A global generics company, Winthrop addresses major health needs in therapeutic areas such as metabolic, cardiology, thrombosis and pain. It is currently present in 22 countries throughout Europe, Asia, South America and Africa and intends to expand rapidly in other countries.

Built on the enduring strengths of the Sanofi-Aventis Group, the new generics company guarantees the highest standards of quality not only in terms of product efficacy and safety, but also in terms of strict manufacturing quality control.

Winthrop was recently launched to the medical community in Bacolod, Cebu, Metro Manila and Davao. Keynote speaker Usec Teddie Rivera, president and CEO of the Philippine International Trading Corporation (PITC-Pharma), lauded Sanofi-Aventis for supporting the government in its generics campaign.

"Winthrop will help us push the use of generics," Usec Rivera said in his keynote address. "We are very happy that Sanofi-Aventis thought of its social responsibility by creating a quality generics company. It is the first multinational pharmaceutical company that has shown cooperation with doctors and with government."

To coincide with its launching, Winthrop introduced its antidiabetic generic drug, Winthrop glimepiride.

Citing results from an international stability study, Dr. May Pagunsan, associate medical director of Sanofi-Aventis said, "Winthrop glimepiride assures patients of the quality and performance of originator brands."

Dr. Pagunsan pointed out that in these times of generics proliferation, there is need to be discriminating and selective, making sure that the product comes from a reputable company.

Usec Rivera also commended Winthrop for its pricing strategy. He said, "I am very happy that Winthrop glimepiride's price is aligned with President Arroyo's SONA requesting multinational drug companies to lower their prices by 50 percent."

Present at the launch in Cebu was Dr. Lakshmi Legaspi from the Center for Health Development for Central Visayas. She affirmed the government's commitment to deliver quality and affordable healthcare to all Filipinos.

During the launches in Metro Manila, Visayas and Mindanao, Winthrop's management team expressed their support of the government's initiatives to improve healthcare delivery. "Winthrop will offer quality and affordable medicines to all because Filipinos are at the heart of our business," Raagas said.

In a courtesy call made to Secretary Francisco Duque III by the management of Winthrop, the DOH secretary said, "Thank you for your sense of social responsibility."

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of December 29, 2007)

52-WEEK HIGH	52-WEEK LOW	STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
		BANKS					
17.5	6.8	Asiatrust Development Bank Inc.	8.3	8.4	8.3	8.3	175,000
73	43	Banco de Oro-EPCI Inc.	57	58	56	56	3,229,700
73.5	53	Bank of the Philippine Islands	63.5	64.5	61.5	62.5	4,126,600
748	544	China Banking Corp.	680	680	670	670	650
23.5	14	Citystate Savings Bank	22.75	23	22.75	23	600
0.63	0.36	Export and Industry Bank Inc.	0.38	0.39	0.38	0.39	2,100,000
75.5	47.5	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.	55.5	56.5	53.5	54	2,993,500
65.5	39	Philippine National Bank	44	44.5	42	44.5	771,000
68	46	Philippine Savings Bank	60.5	61	60.5	61	1,500
39.57	20	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	24	24.5	23.75	24.25	2,216,300
90	61	Security Bank Corp.	72	72	70	70	133,200
68	42	Union Bank of the Philippines	44	44.5	43.5	43.5	441,700
		OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
5.6	1.92	ATR KimEng Financial Corp.	4	4	4	4	25,000
2.22	0.6	Bankard Inc.	1.94	1.96	1.88	1.9	3,957,000
16.25	4.6	CitisecOnline.com Inc.	11.5	11.5	10.5	11	2,234,100
1.6	0.5	First Abacus Financial Holdings Corp.	0.91	0.91	0.91	0.91	50,000
5.9	4.8	I-Remit Inc.	5	5	4.8	4.8	1,065,000
1,970.00	1,580.00	Manulife Financial Corp.	1,705.00	1,710.00	1,705.00	1,710.00	1,590
5	2.7	National Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	3.05	3.05	2.85	2.9	4,480,000
1,300.00	260	The Philippine Stock Exchange Inc.	1,080.00	1,130.00	1,040.00	1,040.00	60,060
2,500.00	1,970.00	Sun Life Financial Inc	2,220.00	2,225.00	2,220.00	2,225.00	820
1.94	1.3	Vantage Corp	1.48	1.52	1.48	1.48	2,004,000
		ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
6.2	3.8	Aboitiz Power Corp.	4.9	5.2	4.9	5.1	6,592,000
0.57	0.22	East Asia Power Resources Corp.	0.3	0.33	0.28	0.3	1,870,000
70.5	49	First Gen Corp.	58	59	56.5	56.5	2,384,700
92	51	First Phil. Holdings Corp.	67	68.5	62.5	64	3,065,700
17.5	8.8	Manila Water Co. Inc.	17	17	16.5	16.75	12,533,500
105.45	27.73	Manila Electric Co.	73	76.5	71	72.5	4,292,600
7.8	4.1	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	6.9	7	6.7	6.9	25,184,000
7.4	3.95	Petron Corp.	6	6.2	5.7	5.7	18,762,000
13.75	6.4	Phoenix Petroleum Philippines Inc.	6.9	7	6.7	6.7	275,000
2.04	0.91	Trans-Asia Oil and Energy Dev't Corp	1.28	1.44	1.28	1.34	12,907,000
		FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
6.3	3.4	Alaska Milk Corp.	4.85	4.85	4.8	4.8	936,000
2.02	1.48	Alliance Tuna International Inc.	1.56	1.62	1.48	1.52	4,240,000
28.5	19.5	Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	23.5	23.5	22.5	22.5	15,800
61	39	Jollibee Foods Corp.	48.5	51	48.5	49.5	2,924,900
9.1	5.7	Pancake House Inc.	8.5	8.5	8.5	8.5	40,000
0.98	0.5	RFM Corp.	0.69	0.69	0.69	0.69	460,000
3.3	2.06	Roxas Holdings	2.7	2.7	2.65	2.7	701,000
80	42.5	San Miguel Corp. "A"	48	51.5	47.5	50	470,300
88	43	San Miguel Corp. "B"	48.5	52	48	50.5	2,096,100
0.66	0.33	Swift Foods Inc.	0.43	0.43	0.43	0.43	10,000
6.5	3	Tanduay Holdings Inc	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	10,000
20.75	13.5	Universal Robina Corp	14.5	14.75	14	14	1,303,600
		CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
6.4	2.65	EEI Corp.	4.65	4.65	4.3	4.6	2,743,000
9.2	4.95	Holcim Philippines Inc.	7.9	7.9	7.6	7.9	689,000
2	0.81	Southeast Asia Cement Holdings Inc.	1	1.04	0.94	0.97	6,230,000
23	1.48	TKC Steel Corp	9.5	9.6	8.7	8.8	1,534,000
		CHEMICALS					
6.3	3.75	Chemrez Technologies Inc.	4.2	4.25	4	4.05	842,000
2.4	1.31	Euro-Med Laboratories Phil. Inc.	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	20,000
1.4	0.61	Interphil Laboratories Inc. "B"	1	1	1	1	50,000
1.46	0.51	Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.86	60,000
		DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
0.75	0.17	Picop Resources Inc	0.37	0.38	0.34	0.35	12,130,000
9	6.2	Splash Corp	7.1	7.1	6.2	6.2	1,390,000
		HOLDING FIRMS					
39	18.75	ABS-CBN Holdings Corp.-PDR	34	34	34	34	10,800
3.9	2.7	A. Soriano Corp.	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	283,000
0.185	0.0525	AJO.net Holdings Inc.	0.125	0.125	0.11	0.11	165,710,000
1.28	0.29	APC Group Inc.	0.62	0.63	0.57	0.59	1,810,000
3.65	1.5	ATN Holdings Inc. "A"	2.65	2.65	2.4	2.5	197,000
3.7	1.5	ATN Holdings Inc. "B"	2.95	2.95	2.95	2.95	1,000
0.018	0.0075	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. "A"	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	44,000,000
9.7	5.8	Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc.	6.8	6.9	6.8	6.8	729,000
0.021	0.0095	Alcorn Gold Resources Corp.	0.014	0.015	0.014	0.015	37,100,000
7.3	3.5	Alliance Global Group Inc.	5.6	5.8	5.5	5.7	55,139,000
1.38	0.59	Alsons Consolidated Resources Inc.	0.74	0.74	0.71	0.72	250,000
2.9	0.89	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.	2.48	2.5	2.42	2.42	3,490,000
8	0.8	Aries Prime Resources Inc	3	3	3	3	13,000
645	397.92	Ayala Corp.	565	575	550	560	1,849,050
5.8	1.64	Benpres Holdings Corp.	3.9	4	3.7	3.9	3,926,000
12	5	DMCI Holdings Inc.	10.5	10.5	9.6	9.8	1,823,000
8	3.15	Filinvest Development Corp.	6.5	6.5	6.3	6.5	120,000
3.55	1.76	House of Investments Inc.	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	135,000
14.5	8.7	JG Summit Holdings Inc.	10	10	9.8	9.8	194,000
5.9	0.61	Jolliville Holdings Corp.	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58	1,000
0.6	0.23	MEDCO Holdings Inc.	0.45	0.54	0.45	0.54	350,000
11.5	1.5	Minerales Industrias Corp.	6.8	6.8	5.9	6.1	6,447,000
8.5	3	PAL Holdings Inc.	5.6	5.7	5.5	5.5	70,000
0.28	0.016	Pacifica Inc. "A"	0.24	0.25	0.22	0.23	1,015,060,000
0.75	0.19	Prime Orion Philippines Inc.	0.5	0.53	0.47	0.47	10,260,000
452.5	268.53	SM Investments Corp.	350	355	327.5	327.5	257,880
2.1	1.08	Seafront Resources Corp.	1.12	1.12	1.12	1.12	2,000
0.73	0.14	Sinophil Corp.	0.36	0.36	0.34	0.34	4,740,000
0.75	0.1	Wellex Industries Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.29	0.29	5,230,000
1.1	0.26	Zeus Holdings Inc	0.68	0.68	0.51	0.51	210,000
		PROPERTY					
2.34	1	A Brown Co. Inc	1.52	1.52	1.44	1.46	405,000
8.9	5	Anchor Land Holdings Inc	7.1	7.4	7	7.4	168,000
19.25	11.88	Ayala Land Inc.	15.5	15.75	15.25	15.25	39,791,800
1.88	1	Belle Corp.	1.22	1.22	1.12	1.12	4,746,000
4.7	3.05	Cebu Holdings Inc.	3.5	3.7	3.2	3.7	2,341,000
3.83	1.9	City and Land Developers Inc.	2	2	1.9	1.9	156,000
0.86	0.39	Crown Equities Inc.	0.59	0.59	0.58	0.58	150,000
0.83	0.24	Cyber Bay Corp.	0.4	0.41	0.34	0.34	18,080,000
0.99	0.52	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.74	0.74	0.71	0.73	9,680,000
6.9	1.08	Eton Properties Philippines Inc.	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	15,000
0.47	0.0575	Ever Gotesco Resources and Hold'gs Inc.	0.235	0.235	0.225	0.225	4,930,000
1.48	0.61	Fil-Estate Land Inc.	1.06	1.06	0.97	1	23,996,000
2.44	1.28	Filinvest Land Inc.	1.56	1.6	1.46	1.48	60,801,000
1.12	0.31	MRC Allied Industries Inc.	0.49	0.49	0.46	0.46	530,000
4.6	1.96	Megaworld Corp.	3.9	4	3.75	3.9	51,246,000
6.4	1.5	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.	3.9	3.9	3.75	3.75	600,000
5.2	2.2	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.-Warrants	2.7	2.75	2.6	2.6	492,000
0.7	0.125	Phil. Estates Corp.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	70,000
0.86	0.32	Philippine Realty and Holdings Corp.	0.43	0.5	0.42	0.43	2,700,000
9.2	1.36	Polar Property Holdings Corp.	4.5	4.5	4.4	4.4	80,000
23	14.5	Robinson Land Corp.	18.5	18.75	18	18.25	4,408,100
5.9	1.93	SM Development Corp.	4	4	3.8	3.8	765,000
13.5	7.6	SM Prime Holdings Inc.	11.5	11.75	11.25	11.5	8,795,500
3.25	1.5	Shang Properties Inc	2.26	2.26	2.22	2.22	193,000
4.5	0.38	Sta. Lucia Land Inc.	2.04	2.04	1.9	1.92	604,000
1.34	0.46	Suntrust Home Developers Inc.	0.55	0.55	0.5	0.5	1,130,000
0.49	0.09	Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.245	0.245	6,780,000
7.5	3.65	Vista Land and Landscapes Inc	4.9	4.95	4.9	4.9	21,190,000
		MEDIA					
38.5	18.75	ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	34	34	33.5	34	326,400
12	7.6	GMA Holdings Inc	7.8	8.1	7.8	7.8	3,235,000
11.75	7.5	GMA Network Inc	7.7	7.9	7.7	7.8	472,000
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
2.12	1.1	Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc.	1.32	1.34	1.28	1.28	4,180,000
1,750.00	1,180.00	Globe Telecom Inc.	1,510.00	1,560.00	1,510.00	1,520.00	63,160
3,285.00	2,250.00	Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co	3,040.00	3,105.00	3,040.00	3,100.00	179,920
8.1	5.5	Pilipino Telephone Corp	7.2	7.3	6.7	7.1	3,392,000
		INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
0.30	0.17	Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.18	0.18	1,880,000
15.5	2.1	Diversified Financial Network Inc.	13.75	13.75	12.5	13.25	3,208,800
11.5	2.5	IPVG Corp.	7.6	7.9	7.4	7.8	1,735,000
0.065	0.027	ISM Communications Corp.	0.039	0.039	0.036	0.038	41,700,000
0.32	0.05	Island Information and Technology Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.17	0.17	7,450,000
2.08	1.1	Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.34	1.34	1.3	1.34	1,000,000
0.0725	0.03	Philweb Corp.	0.048	0.049	0.046	0.047	77,000,000
5.8	1.64	Transpacific Broadband Group Int'l. Inc.	2.6	2.6	2.48	2.55	1,342,000
		TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
2.14	1.14	Aboitiz Transport System Corp.	1.3	1.3	1.28	1.28	232,000
48	18.75	Int'l Container Terminal Services Inc.	43.5	48	43.5	47	8,290,500
2.04	1.12	Lorenzo Shipping Corp	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	25,000
		HOTEL & LEISURE					
4.25	1.8	Leisure and Resorts World Corp.	2.24	2.42	2.24	2.42	221,000
1.16	0.32	Premiere Entertainment Productions Inc.	1.02	1.02	0.96	0.97	9,170,000
1.2	0.54	Waterfront Philippines Inc	0.85	0.87	0.83	0.84	1,990,000
		EDUCATION					
3.7	2.6	iPeople Inc	3.15	3.15	3.15	3.15	13,000
		DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
6	2.04	Macroasia Corp.	4.85	4.85	4.5	4.55	67,000
17.25	9.8	Pacific Online Systems Corp.	11.25	11.25	11	11	78,000
30	6.2	Paxys Inc.	7	7.1	6.2	6.8	885,000
472.5	390	eTelecare Global Solutions Inc	445	460	425	442.5	74,700
		MINING					
0.017	0.0085	Abra Mining and Industrial Corp.	0.011	0.011	0.01	0.01	97,000,000
7.2	3.6	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "A"	6.7	7	6.3	6.5	5,729,000
7.4	3.85	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "B"	7	7.3	6.8	6.8	3,177,000
21.25	7.8	Atlas Cons. Mining and Dev't Corp.	12.75	13.25	12.5	12.75	1,255,500
14.25	8.9	Benguet Corp. "A"	12	13.25	12	13	376,700
12.75	1.96	Dizon Copper Silver Mines Inc.	9.4	9.5	8.5	8.7	266,000
3.1	0.6	Geograce Resources Philippines Inc.	1.94	2	1.74	1.82	110,573,000
0.56	0.18	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "A"	0.53	0.53	0.47	0.48	274,980,000
0.61	0.22	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "B"	0.57	0.58	0.51	0.53	133,860,000
0.038	0.017	Manila Mining Corp. "A"	0.029	0.03	0.027	0.028	663,100,000
0.041	0.02	Manila Mining Corp. "B"	0.032	0.034	0.032	0.032	812,400,000
30	3.6	NiHAO Minerals Resources Int'l Inc.	20.75	21	18	19.25	3,560,000
0.021	0.0088	Omico Corp.	0.015	0.015	0.013	0.014	1,520,700,000
0.015	0.007	Omico Corp.-Warrants	0.0095	0.0095	0.009	0.009	63,000,000
11.25	3.5	Philex Mining Corp.	9.8	9.9	9.4	9.8	10,322,000
49.5	14.75	Semirara Mining Corp.	46	49.5	46	46	1,682,000
1.36	0.55	United Paragon Mining Corp.	0.68	0.68	0.65	0.65	1,310,000
1.8	0.85	Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp	1.12	1.12	1.08	1.08	3,581,000
		OIL					
0.58	0.25	Basic Energy Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	5,420,000
0.029	0.01	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. "A"	0.023	0.024	0.022	0.022	252,800,000
0.03	0.01	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. "B"	0.026	0.026	0.024	0.025	111,000,000
13.75	9	Petroenergy Resources Corp.	10	10	9.9	9.9	151,000
0.032	0.0095	The Philodrill Corp.	0.028	0.028	0.026	0.026	657,600,000

	AVERAGES		VOLUME	VALUE
Financial	862.98 UP	4.19	30,070,320	853,367,345.00
Industrial	4,152.69 UP	41.66	126,762,200	1,568,173,575.00
Holding Firms	1,982.42 DOWN	11.38	1,359,396,930	1,793,534,340.00
Property	1,570.76 DOWN	7.69	264,351,400	1,270,962,880.00
Service	1,864.57 UP	57.73	164,975,480	1,200,605,505.00
Mining & Oil	8,286.26 DOWN	168.46	4,670,843,200	855,951,575.00
All Shares Index	2,172.57 UP	15.20		
PSEi	3,578.55 UP	41.55		
		GRAND TOTALS	6,616,399,530	7,542,595,220.00

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SOURCE: TECHNISTOCK, PSE

Generali Pilipinas nets ₱1.95B in premiums

By E. S. Lacson

GENERALI PILIPINAS, the local insurer of Assicurazioni Generali, the world's fourth biggest insurance group, said it generated P189 million in premiums in October, boosting its total premiums for the first 10 months to P1.95 billion, up 25 percent from the same 10-month period last year.

No comparative figures were disclosed.

Generali chief operating officer Sharon Borres-Maranan said that bancassurance, or the practice of selling life insurance through its bank partner Banco de Oro Universal Bank, breached the P1-billion mark in October this year, largely driving the 10-month performance.

"Our bancassurance channel is as strong as ever," Maranan said.

As of October, life premiums grew by 24 percent year-on-year while the nonlife business (property and casualty insurance operations) expanded 27 percent year-on-year.

Maranan said that with the insurance company's strong 10-month financial performance, Generali Pilipinas expects to end the year with total revenues of P2.7 billion, of which P2.2 billion will come from its life insurance business and the balance of P500 million from its nonlife operations.

Maranan said she was also optimistic about 2008 as it sees total revenues growing to P4.5 billion, with life insurance pitching in P3.4 billion and nonlife contributing P1.1 billion.

"The merger between Banco de Oro and Equitable PCI Bank opened opportunities for us (in terms of bancassurance with the increase in branches), Maranan said.

Locally, Generali Pilipinas has been in operation since 1999 as a joint venture among Generali Asia, Banco de Oro Universal Bank of mall tycoon Henry Sy and Jerneh Asia Berhad of the Kuok Group.

Sultan Energy secures 25-year coal supply deal

By Abigail L. Ho

CONAL HOLDINGS CORP. (CHC) HAS awarded Sultan Energy Philippines Corp. a 25-year coal supply deal for the company's planned 200-megawatt (MW) coal-fired power plant in Mindanao.

The company, a 60-40 joint venture between the Alcantara Group of Companies and Thailand's Egco International, will be specially designing the power plant's boilers to burn the type of coal from Sultan Energy's mines.

Under the memorandum of agreement, CHC will remit a P50-million advance payment to Sultan Energy, representing supplementary funding in case this is needed for exploration and development activities in the coal site.

CHC will then buy 700,000 metric tons (MT) of coal a year for 25 years starting from the power plant's commercial operation. This is scheduled between Nov. 30, 2011, and Dec. 31, 2012.

The price of coal to be sold by Sultan Energy will be indexed on international coal and freight prices, with the actual price formula to be made part of the definitive coal supply and purchase agreement that the two parties will eventually forge.

Also under the MOA, Sultan Energy should provide additional coal to CHC should the company pursue an expansion of its planned generation facility.

The plant's coal demand is projected to rise to 2 million MT a year by 2014, and increase to 3 million MT once the plant's capacity reaches 900 MW.

CHC, for its part, will have to build and maintain a coal conveyance system from the coal site to the power plant, as well as a pier with a port facility that Sultan Energy can use to ship coal to other buyers.

Sultan Energy is undertaking coal reserve definition with the use of four drilling rigs at its Lake Sebu, South Cotabato, mine site.

According to the company, coal deposits in the Cotabato basin could be as big as, or even bigger than, Semirara's, based on surface indications.

The company has recently resumed drilling in the area and will continue to expand its exploration activities to determine the full extent of its coal resources.

Surface indications and initial drilling activities covering just 35 percent of the company's property has already resulted in the identification of at least 211 million MT of coal resource.

This means that Sultan Energy can produce more than enough coal for the 900-MW CHC plant as well as for other greenfield plants that might be constructed in the next five years.

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ALABANG "B"	Call now	RIVIERA GOLF "C"	150K	CC@TAG	Call now
CALATAGAN "A"	50K	SHERWOOD "B"	130K	CLUB FILIPINO	80K
CAMP JOHN HAY	300K	SPLENDIDO	150K	MKTI SPORTS	Call now
CANLUBANG	500K	STA. ELENA "A"	1.9M	MLA GOLF IND	Call now
CC@ TAG	Call now	SUBIC BAY YACHT	Call now	MLA POLO	5.0M
EASTRIDGE "A"	150K	TAG H'LANDS	700K	H'LANDS GOLF	650K
MLA POLO	Call now	TAG MIDLANDS	Call now	TAG MIDLANDS	Call now
ORCHARD "A"	170K	THE COUNTRY CLUB	Call now	WACK WACK	9.0M

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MIMOSA	10,000	TAG MIDLANDS	30,000

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CLUB	SELLING	BUYING
ALABANG A	PLS CALL	1,000,000
ALABANG B	1,250,000	PLS CALL
BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	580,000	550,000
CANLUBANG GOLF CLUB	465,000	PLS CALL
CELEBRITY CLUB	PLS CALL	80,000
CLUB FILIPINO	PLS CALL	100,000
CLUB PUNTA FUEGO	350,000	PLS CALL
COUNTRY CLUB AT TAGAYTAY	PLS CALL	290,000
EAGLERIDGE A	PLS CALL	140,000
EAGLERIDGE C	380,000	PLS CALL
EASTRIDGE B	PLS CALL	150,000
FONTANA B	70,000	PLS CALL
FOREST HILLS A	PLS CALL	70,000
FOREST HILLS C	200,000	PLS CALL
MAKATI SPORTS CLUB A	PLS CALL	200,000
MAKATI SPORTS CLUB B	PLS CALL	220,000
MANILA GOLF CORP	PLS CALL	20,000,000
MANILA GOLF IND	21,000,000	19,000,000
MANILA POLO CLUB	5,000,000	4,500,000
MANILA SOUTHWOODS A	290,000	PLS CALL
MANILA SOUTHWOODS B	PLS CALL	630,000
METROCLUB A	150,000	PLS CALL
ORCHARD A	150,000	PLS CALL
ORCHARD B	PLS CALL	PLS CALL
ORCHARD C	350,000	PLS CALL
QUEZON CITY SPORTS	140,000	120,000
RIVIERA GOLF B	160,000	PLS CALL
RIVIERA GOLF C	180,000	PLS CALL
ROCKWELL CLUB	PLS CALL	280,000
ROYALE TAGAYTAY B	60,000	PLS CALL
SPA & LODGE	550,000	PLS CALL
SPLENDIDO	300,000	150,000
STA ELENA A	1,900,000	1,700,000
SUMMIT POINT C	450,000	PLS CALL
TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS	650,000	PLS CALL
TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS	650,000	PLS CALL
THE COUNTRY CLUB	1,200,000	PLS CALL
VALLEY GOLF	250,000	PLS CALL
VALLE VERDE	PLS CALL	PLS CALL
WACK WACK	PLS CALL	9,500,000

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G & W clubshares SEC License Broker No.: A-17597

FREE PLAYING RIGHTS AVAILABLE — As of December 3, 2007

SHARES AVAILABLE

CLUB	SELLER	BUYER
Alabang Country Club A/B*	1,100,000/1,230,000*	1,000,000
Alta Vista A/B*/Corp.**	-	260,000/Pls. Call*
Baguio Country Club	600,000	560,000
Camp John Hay	330,000	270,000
Canlubang Golf	500,000	-
Canyon Woods	90,000	-
Club Filipino	120,000	90,000
Eagleridge A/B*/C**	250,000*/350,000**	200,000*
Eastridge A/B*	230,000*	150,000*
Forest Hills A/B*/C**	90,000/180,000*/200,000**	50,000/160,000*
Luisita Golf A	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
Manila Golf Corporate	23,000,000	-
Manila Golf Individual	Pls. Call	18,000,000
Manila Polo	5,000,000	3,900,000
Manila Southwoods A/B*	300,000/Pls. Call*	250,000
Makati Sports Club A/B*	250,000	190,000
Manila Yacht Club Ind.	200,000	-
Metropolitan Club A/B*	160,000	100,000
Mimosa C1/C2*/C3**	220,000/560,000**	150,000/430,000*/600,000**
Mt. Malarayat A	180,000	-
Orchard A/B*/C**	170,000/250,000*/380,000**	-
Quezon City Sports Club	170,000	120,000
Riviera Golf A/B*/C**	150,000*/250,000**	Pls. Call
Rockwell Leisure Club	350,000	Pls. Call
Royale Tagaytay CC	65,000	-
Sherwood A/B*/C**	70,000/130,000*	100,000*
Splendido Taal	200,000	Pls. Call
Sta. Elena Golf A/B*	2,100,000/2,500,000*	1,600,000
The Palms Country Club	350,000	320,000
Tagaytay Country Club	300,000	280,000
Tagaytay Highlands	680,000	-
Tagaytay Midlands	670,000	-
Valley Golf	250,000	200,000
Valle Verde Ind.	100,000	70,000
Wack Wack Golf	Pls. Call	

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Announcement: We are now located at: 2nd Floor, Goodland Bldg. (formerly Nat'l Steel Bldg.), 377 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City
Tel No.: 890-GOLF (4653)* 0917-8043072; Fax no. 896-1931

Quotation as of December 3, 2007

CLUB	SELLER	BUYER
ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "A"	1,100,000	1,000,000
ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "B"	1,250,000	-
BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	600,000	550,000
CAMP JOHN HAY	300,000	270,000
CANLUBANG	480,000	430,000
CAPITOL HILLS	40,000	-
CEBU COUNTRY CLUB	-	2,100,000
CELEBRITY SPORTS CLUB	100,000	80,000
CLUB FILIPINO	120,000	90,000
EAGLERIDGE "A"	160,000	140,000
EAGLERIDGE "B"	270,000	-
EAGLERIDGE "C"	350,000	300,000
FOREST HILLS "A"	100,000	80,000
LUISITA GOLF "A"	300,000	250,000
MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "A"	250,000	200,000
MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "B"	300,000	220,000
MANILA GOLF (CORP)	23,000,000	20,000,000
MANILA GOLF (IND)	21,000,000	19,000,000
MANILA POLO	5,000,000	4,700,000
MANILA SOUTHWOODS "A"	300,000	250,000
MANILA SOUTHWOODS "B"	650,000	630,000
MANILA YACHT CLUB	200,000	150,000
MIMOSA (C2)	500,000	475,000
MT. MALARAYAT GOLD "A"	140,000	-
ORCHARD GOLF CLUB "A"	160,000	140,000
ORCHARD GOLF CLUB "B"	280,000	-
ORCHARD GOLF CLUB "C"	300,000	-
QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB	150,000	130,000
ROCKWELL CLUB	300,000	230,000
SPA & LODGE	500,000	400,000
STA. ELENA "A"	1,800,000	1,700,000
STA. ELENA "B"	-	1,900,000
TAGAYTAY COUNTRY CLUB	300,000	280,000
TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS	680,000	630,000
TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS	650,000	630,000
THE PALMS COUNTRY CLUB "A"	340,000	300,000
VALLE VERDE (IND)	90,000	75,000
VALLEY GOLF	240,000	200,000
WACK-WACK GOLF CLUB	10,000,000	9,500,000

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CURRENCIES

December 2, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.674172	1.000000	42.7980
Japan	Yen	0.006124	0.009083	0.3887
United Kingdom	Pound	1.403357	2.081600	89.0883
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.086609	0.128467	5.4981
Switzerland	Franc	0.606543	0.899685	38.5047
Canada	Dollar	0.684439	1.015228	43.4497
Singapore	Dollar	0.467137	0.692905	29.6549
Australia	Dollar	0.595085	0.882690	37.7774
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.800193	2.670227	114.2804
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.181718	0.269542	11.5359
Brunei	Dollar	0.465524	0.690512	29.5525
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000071	0.000106	0.0045
Thailand	Baht	0.021889	0.032468	1.3896
UAE	Dirham	0.184301	0.273373	11.6998
EU	Euro	1.000000	1.483300	63.4823
Korea	Won	0.000724	0.001074	0.0460
China	Yuan**	0.091172	0.135236	5.7878
Denmark	Kroner	0.134108	0.198922	8.5135
India	Rupee	0.017042	0.025278	1.0818
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.199459	0.295858	12.6621
New Zealand	Dollar	0.519393	0.770416	32.9723
Sweden	Kroner	0.106879	0.158534	6.7849
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.020868	0.030953	1.3247

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY time—Nov. 28, 2007
* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen. ** Asian time closing rate as of Nov. 28, 2007

Republic of the Philippines

SANGGUNIANG PANLUNGSOD

Pasig City

ORDINANCE NO. 17
Series of 2007

AN ORDINANCE REGULATING THE ESTABLISHMENT, OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF ON-LINE INTERNET GAMING CENTERS, POKER, CARD GAMES, CASINO, BINGO, LOTTO, OFF-TRACK BETTING, JAI-ALAI FRONTON AND OTHER SIMILAR ACTIVITIES AUTHORIZED BY PAGCOR AND OTHER AGENCIES OF THE GOVERNMENT IN THE CITY OF PASIG.

Introduced by: **Councilor Renato G. Lipana**

WHEREAS, sub-paragraph (vii), paragraph (4), Section 458 of the Local Government Code of the Philippines authorizes the Sangguniang Panlungsod to regulate the establishment, operation and maintenance of amusement facilities particularly those which tend to disturb the community or annoy the inhabitants, or require the suspension or suppression of the same, or prohibit certain forms of amusement or entertainment in order to protect the social and moral welfare of the community.

NOW THEREFORE, the Sangguniang Panlungsod of Pasig City in session duly assembled hereby ordained that:

ARTICLE I
TITLE OF ORDINANCE

Section 1. Title of the Ordinance. This ordinance shall be known as "An Ordinance Regulating the Establishment, Operation and Maintenance of On-Line Internet Gaming Centers, Poker, Card Games, Casino, Bingo, Lotto, Off-track Betting, Jai-alai Fronton and other similar activities authorized by PAGCOR and other agencies of the government in the City of Pasig."

ARTICLE II
DEFINITION OF TERMS

Section 2. Definition of Terms. The following terms as used in this Ordinance shall be defined as follows:

Bingo – is a game of chance in which each player has one or more cards printed with differently numbered squares on which to place markers when the respective numbers are drawn and announced by a caller. The first player to mark a complete row of numbers is the winner.

Card Games – are games played for pleasure or gambling (or both) with one or more decks of playing cards.

Casino – is a public room or building for gambling and other entertainment

Fronton – is an area for jai-alai.

Game Console – is a specialized electronic device designed to generate virtual casino games and internet casinos. It requires a TV or monitor and similar device for display.

Lotto – is a game of chance similar to bingo, typically with an accumulating jackpot, in which participants play numbers of their choice in a random drawing.

Poker – is any of various card games played by two or more players who bet on the value of their hands.

Off-Track Betting – refers to a system of placing bets away from a racetrack.

On-line Gaming Center – is an establishment operating ***virtual casino games or on-line internet casinos*** which enable gamblers to play and wager on casino games through the internet.

Jai-alai – a court game in which players use a long hand-shaped basket (cesta) strapped to the wrist to propel a ball against a wall.

ARTICLE III
COVERAGE

Section 3. Coverage. This ordinance shall apply to all on-line internet gaming centers, poker, card games, casino, bingo, lotto, off-track betting, jai-alai fronton and other similar activities authorized by PAGCOR and other agencies of the government, such as but not limited to, lotto, fronton, off- track betting stations, cockpits and similar activities privately-owned and operated within the City of Pasig.

ARTICLE IV
AUTHORITY, PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

Section 4. Authority. This ordinance is enacted pursuant to sub-paragraph (vii), paragraph (4), Section 458 of the Local Government Code of the Philippines for the regulation of the establishment, operation and maintenance of amusement facilities.

Section 5. Purpose. This ordinance is enacted for the following purposes:

a. Regulating the establishment, operation and maintenance of on-line internet gaming centers, poker, card games, casino, bingo, lotto, off-track betting, jai-alai fronton and other similar activities authorized by PAGCOR and other agencies of the government to protect the social and moral welfare, and in order to keep peace and order of the community; and

b. Regulating the entry of minors in all on-line internet gaming centers, poker, card games, casino, bingo, lotto, off-track betting, jai-alai fronton and other similar activities authorized by PAGCOR and other agencies of the government.

Section 6. Objectives. The objectives of this ordinance are the following:

a. To prevent proliferation of all on-line internet gaming centers, poker, card games, casino, bingo, lotto, off-track betting, jai-alai fronton and other similar activities authorized by PAGCOR and other agencies of the government, particularly those that tend to disturb the community or annoy its inhabitants;

b. To discourage people, especially students and other minors from vices which has an adverse effect in their education, social and moral welfare; and

c. To maintain the peace and order of the community as a whole.

ARTICLE V
PUNISHABLE ACTS / PROHIBITION / EXEMPTION

Section 7. No on-line gaming centers, poker, card games, casino, bingo, lotto, off-track betting, jai-alai fronton and other similar activities authorized by PAGCOR and other agencies of the government shall be established and operated without a Mayor's Permit.

Section 8. Any person, natural or juridical, desiring to engage, within the territorial jurisdiction of the City of Pasig, in the business of on-line internet gaming centers, poker, card games, casino, bingo, lotto, off-track betting, jai-alai fronton and other similar activities authorized by PAGCOR and other agencies of the government, for entertainment or amusement of its customers shall first secure the necessary permits from all authorized offices and shall secure a license to operate the same from the City of Pasig subject to the compliance with the requirements prescribed by the City Mayor and payments of taxes, fees and other charges thereof, in accordance with the Pasig Revenue Code as amended and a Certification of No Objection from the Chairman of the Committee on Games and Amusement of the Sangguniang Panlungsod.

There shall be no business permit/license to operate on-line internet gaming centers poker, card games, casino, bingo, lotto, off-track betting, jai-alai fronton and the like shall be issued within the 200 meter radius from the nearest entrance or exits of any government offices/buildings, church or house of worship, school, institution of learning and hospitals, whether public or privately owned.

Owner/operator/proprietor of business enumerated in Section 7 and Section 8 hereof and existing at the time of the approval of this ordinance is given a period of one (1) year from the date of the approval hereof to transfer his/her gaming center outside the 200 meter radius from the nearest entrance or exits of any school, institution of learning and hospitals, whether public or private, government offices/buildings, church or house of worship.

Section 9. Minors shall be prohibited from entering any such centers and establishments at any time except when accompanied by their parents or guardian.

The owner/operator/proprietor of the establishment must enter in a record book the name of the minor, the time and day of entry and the name of the person who accompanied the minor. The record book must be maintained for inspection by the authorized representative of the City.

Section 10. The owner/operator/proprietor of on-line internet gaming centers, poker, card games, casino, bingo, lotto, off-track betting, jai-alai fronton and similar activities are required to display at least (2) legible and visible signs posted within their premises saying ***"MINORS ARE PROHIBITED FROM ENTERING"*** in English or in Filipino, for the information and guidance of all concerned.

Section 11. Said business shall not be allowed to be used by disorderly characters, criminals and for other illegal activities.

ARTICLE VI
AGE VERIFICATION

Section 12. It shall not be a defense for the owners, proprietors, operators, managers or administrators of businesses mentioned in Section 7 and Section 8 of this Ordinance that he/she has no knowledge or not aware of the real age of the minor who stayed in the business establishment.

Section 13. In case of doubt as to the real age of the person, the owners, proprietors, operators, managers or administrators shall verify, by means of any valid form of identification paper containing both the photograph and the date of birth of then bearer, such as, but not limited to a valid school identification card and the like, that the person is at least eighteen (18) years old.

ARTICLE VII
PENALTIES

Section 14. Violation of any provisions in Article V of this ordinance shall be punished as follows:

First Offense – a fine of Three Thousand Pesos (P3,000.00). If the violator has no valid mayor's permit to operate, the game consoles shall be confiscated in favor of the City Government of Pasig;

Second Offense – a fine of Three Thousand Pesos (P3,000.00). If the violator has no valid mayor's permit to operate, the game consoles shall be confiscated in favor of the City Government of Pasig;

Third Offense – a fine of Five Thousand Pesos (P5,000.00) or a penalty of imprisonment ranging from one (1) month to three (3) months, or both in the discretion of the Court. Revocation of the business permit and permanent closure of business establishment to operate, by the City Mayor.

If the gaming centers, poker, card games, casino, bingo, lotto, off-track betting, jai-alai fronton and other similar establishments is managed or owned by a corporation or partnership, its President or Chief Executive or General Manager shall be made liable in case of violation of this ordinance.

It is hereby emphasized that if any of the businesses enumerated in Section 7 and Section 8 of the Ordinance is operating without a Mayor's Permit or Mayor's License to operate, the owner if a single proprietorship or if owned by a corporation, the President or Chief Executive Officer or General Manager shall be penalized of Five Thousand Pesos (Php5,000.00) and imprisonment of one (1) year upon conviction by a competent court.

ARTICLE VIII
DEPUTATION

Section 15. The City Mayor is authorized to deputize City, Barangay, and Philippine National Police (PNP) assigned in the City of Pasig to apprehend proprietors, operators, managers or administrators of said gaming centers poker, card games, casino, bingo, lotto, off-track betting, jai-alai fronton and other similar activities violating this ordinance.

ARTICLE IX
FINAL PROVISION

Section 16. Repealing Clause. All ordinances, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this ordinance are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

Section 17. Separability Clause. In the event that any provisions of this Ordinance shall be declared illegal or invalid, the other provisions not affected by such declaration shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 18. Effectivity. This Ordinance shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its posting in the Bulletin Board of the City Hall, two (2) conspicuous places in the city and publication in a newspaper of general circulation within the City.

APPROVED, this **6th** day of **September 2007**.

ALEJANDRO E. SANTIAGO
Councilor

CORAZON M. RAYMUNDO, PhD.
Councilor

GREGORIO P. RUPISAN, JR.
Councilor

ROBERTO E. BENITO
Councilor

REYNALDO R. SAN BUENAVENTURA III
Councilor

RODRIGO B. ASILO
Councilor

RENATO G. LIPANA
Councilor

VIRGILIO I. DEL ROSARIO
Councilor

IYO CHRISTIAN C. BERNARDO
Councilor

GREGORIO B. RUPISAN, SR.
LIGA President

REGINO S. BALDERRAMA
Councilor

JOSE MATTHEW A. TATCO IV
SK Federation President

CHARMIE Q. BENAVIDES
Councilor
Minority Floor Leader

AQUILINO S. DELA CRUZ
Councilor
Majority Floor Leader

Attested By:

ROSALIO D. MARTIRES
City Vice-Mayor
Presiding Officer

APPROVED:

ROBERT O. EUSEBIO
City Mayor

Attested By:

LOIDA U. VILLANUEVA
Acting City Council Secretary

(PDI–December 3, 2007)

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Zamboanga City Electric Cooperative, Inc.
(ZAMCELCO)
Zamboanga City

INVITATION TO BID

The Zamboanga City Electric Cooperative, Inc. (ZAMCELCO) at Putik, this city per requisite under Board Policies on Pre-Qualifications, and Bids and Awards, invites ALL interested Bidders/Suppliers to bid for the supply of the following electrical materials/equipment/items, to wit:

No.	Quantity	Unit	Item Description
1	36	PCS	ANCHOR EXPANDING TYPE AGENCY PRICE : P 408.00
2	42	PCS	BOLT, EYE 5/8 X 9 AGENCY PRICE : P 70.82
3	23	PCS	BOLT, EYE 5/8 X 10 AGENCY PRICE : P73.95
4	2	PCS	BOLT, EYE 5/8 X 18 AGENCY PRICE : P 90.48
5	4	PCS	BOLT, MACHINE 1/2 X 6 AGENCY PRICE : P 15.74
6	6	PCS	BOLT, MACHINE 1/2 X 10 AGENCY PRICE : P 29.23
7	22	PCS	BOLT, MACHINE 5/8 X 8 AGENCY PRICE : P 33.09
8	32	PCS	BOLT, MACHINE 5/8 X 10 AGENCY PRICE : P 35.24
9	28	PCS	BOLT, MACHINE 5/8 X 12 AGENCY PRICE : P 38.16
10	10	PCS	BOLT, SINGLE UPSET 5/8 X 10 AGENCY PRICE : P 63.11
11	10	PCS	BOLT, DOUBLE UPSET 5/8 X 10 AGENCY PRICE : P 69.12
12	18	PCS	BRACKET SECONDARY DEADEND AGENCY PRICE : P 88.25
13	6	PCS	CLAMP SUSPENSION AGENCY PRICE : P 495.18
14	8	PCS	CLAMP BONDING AGENCY PRICE : P 38.62
15	72	PCS	CLAMP GUY DEADEND 3 BOLT AGENCY PRICE : P 127.79
16	8	PCS	CLAMP LOOP DEADEND AGENCY PRICE : P 41.58
17	10	PCS	CLAMP DEADEND STRAIN (GUN TYPE) AGENCY PRICE : P 398.71
18	3	PCS	CLAMP HOTLINE AGENCY PRICE : P 300.45
19	28	PCS	CLEVIS SECONDARY SWINGING AGENCY PRICE : P 66.84
20	6	PCS	CLEVIS SHACKLE ANCHOR AGENCY PRICE : P 88.44
21	7500	MTRS	CONDUCTOR BARE #1/0 ACSR AGENCY PRICE : P 36.33
22	5000	MTRS	CONDUCTOR BARE #2 ACSR AGENCY PRICE : P 24.20
23	500	MTRS	CONDUCTOR DUPLEX #2 AGENCY PRICE : P 49.68
24	12	PCS	CONNECTOR COMP. YHD 150 AGENCY PRICE : P 72.11
25	2	PCS	CROSSARM 8 AGENCY PRICE : P1,520.64
26	3	SETS	CUT-OUT ARR. COMB. W/ L.A. AGENCY PRICE : P 5,056.73
27	2	UNITS	DIST. TRANSFORMER, 10KVA CONV. AGENCY PRICE : P 45,311.35
28	2	PCS	FUSE LINK, 3A TYPE K AGENCY PRICE : P 99.39
29	1	PC	FUSE LINK, 6A TYPE K AGENCY PRICE : P 106.76
30	72	PCS	GUY HOOK J-TYPE AGENCY PRICE : P 34.67
31	24	PCS	INSULATOR SPOOL 3 DIA. AGENCY PRICE : P 34.35
32	32	PCS	INSULATOR SPOOL 1-3/4 DIA. AGENCY PRICE : P 17.60
33	68	PCS	LOCK NUT 5/8 AGENCY PRICE : P 7.61
34	5	PCS	NUT, LOCK 1/2 AGENCY PRICE : P 7.61
35	8	PCS	NUT, OVAL EYE 5/8 AGENCY PRICE : P68.61
36	4	PCS	PIN, CROSSARM LONG SHANK AGENCY PRICE : P 161.38
37	50	PCS	PIN, INSULATOR 7 .6KV AGENCY PRICE : P 110.13
38	46	PCS	PIN, POLE TOP 20 LONG AGENCY PRICE : P 161.38
39	36	PCS	ROD ANCHOR 5/8 X 7 AGENCY PRICE : P 286.50
40	16	PCS	INSULATOR SUSPENSION (SILICONE) AGENCY PRICE : P 1,552.00
41	62	PCS	WASHER SQUARE 2-1/4IN. (5/8) AGENCY PRICE : P 10.15
42	36	PCS	WASHER SQUARE FLAT 4 X 4 X 1/2 AGENCY PRICE : P 70.59
43	1200	FT	WIRE GUY, 3/8 7 STRAND AGENCY PRICE : P 18.90 NOTE: FOR CALIBATU, LAMISAHAN LINE EXTENSION PROJECT

You may secure the Pre-qualification Requirements from the office of the Finance Department, ZAMCELCO Complex in Putik, this city anytime during office hours and submit the same upon completion of all requirements thereof.

Submission of the Pre-qualification Requirements shall not be later than 5:00 pm of December 11, 2007 and no documents appertaining thereto, shall be accepted thereafter.

All applicants will be duly notified as to the results of the pre-qualification eligibility process. Only those who are pre-qualified will be allowed to participate in the bidding. A post-qualification may be conducted accordingly hereafter.

Bidding will be conducted on December 20, 2007.

Sealed bid in duplicate copies should be submitted to the Committee on Bids and Awards at the Office of the Finance Department at the above-mentioned address on or before 2:00 p.m. of December 20, 2007. Five percent (5%) Bidder's Bond is required as a matter of policy.

The right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality therein, or to accept such bid as may be considered advantageous to the coop is hereby reserved as an absolute prerogative of ZAMCELCO.

(Sgd.) REINERIO R. RAMOS
General Manager

(PDI--Dec. 3 & 4, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Ilocos Sur
Municipality of Bantay

OFFICE OF THE BIDS & AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

November 26, 2007

The Municipality of Bantay, through the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the *Construction of Bantay Arcade (Phase II)* with an Approved Budget of the Contract of *Thirteen Million Five Hundred Twenty Five Thousand Five Hundred Thirty Two and 50/100 Pesos (P 13,525,532.50)*.

Prospective bidders should possess a valid PCAB License applicable to the contract, have completed a similar contract with a value of at least 50% of the ABC, and have key personnel and equipment available for the prosecution of the contract. The BAC will use non-discretionary "pass/fail" in the Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids. The BAC will conduct Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference/s, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	December 7, 2007
2. Pre-Bid Conference	December 11, 2007 @ 10:00 AM
3. Opening of Bids and Bid Evaluation	December 14, 2007 @ 2:00 PM
4. Post-Qualification	- x -
5. Notice of Award	- x -

The BAC will issue to Prospective Bidders Eligibility Forms at the Municipality of Bantay, Ilocos Sur, upon their submission of a LOI, and upon payment of a non-refundable fee (for Eligibility Form) to the Municipal Treasurer. Prospective Bidders shall submit the Eligibility Requirements to the BAC at the said address. They may also obtain the results of the Eligibility Check by the BAC at the same address.

The BAC will issue Bid Documents only to bidders declared by the BAC to be Eligible for the bidding upon payment of a non-refundable fee (for Bidding Documents) to the Municipal Treasurer of Bantay, Ilocos Sur.

The BAC and the Municipal Government of Bantay assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

Approved by:

(Sgd.) JONATHAN V. GOROSPE
BAC Chairman

(PDI--Dec. 3 & 10, 2007)

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- with Basic Bookkeeping & Management Skills
- preferably a resident of Mandaluyong
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Zamboanga City Electric Cooperative, Inc.
(ZAMCELCO)
Zamboanga City

INVITATION TO BID

The Zamboanga City Electric Cooperative, Inc. (ZAMCELCO) at Putik, this City per requisite under Board Policies on Pre-Qualifications, and Bids and Awards, invites ALL interested Bidders/Suppliers to bid for the supply of the following electrical materials/equipment/items, to wit:

No	Quantity	Unit	Item Description
1	5	PCS	DISTRIBUTION TRANSFORMER BRAND : LG, PHILEC OR ANY EQUIVALENT KVA : 50 TYPE : POLE CONVENTIONAL, DOUBLE BUSHING (BRAND NEW) AGENCY PRICE: P 82,000.00/unit

You may secure the Pre-qualification Requirements from the office of the Finance Department, ZAMCELCO Complex in Putik, this city anytime during office hours and submit the same upon completion of all requirements thereof.

Submission of the Pre-qualification Requirements shall not be later than 5:00 pm of December 7, 2007 and no documents appertaining thereto, shall be accepted thereafter.

All applicants will be duly notified as to the results of the pre-qualification eligibility process. Only those who are pre-qualified will be allowed to participate in the bidding. A post-qualification may be conducted accordingly hereafter.

Bidding will be conducted on **December 18, 2007.**

Sealed bid in duplicate copies should be submitted to the Committee on Bids and Awards at the Office of the Finance Department at the above-mentioned address on or before 2:00 p.m. of **December 18, 2007.** Five percent (5%) Bidder's Bond is required as a matter of policy.

The right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality therein, or to accept such bid as may be considered advantageous to the coop is hereby reserved as an absolute prerogative of ZAMCELCO.

(Sgd.) REINERIO R. RAMOS
General Manager

(PDI--December 3 & 4, 2007)

Zamboanga City Electric Cooperative, Inc.
(ZAMCELCO)
Zamboanga City

INVITATION TO BID

The Zamboanga City Electric Cooperative, Inc. (ZAMCELCO) at Putik, this City per requisite under Board Policies on Pre-Qualifications, and Bids and Awards, invites ALL interested Bidders/Suppliers to bid for the supply of the following electrical materials/equipment/items, to wit:

No	Quantity	Unit	Item Description
1	3	PCS	DISTRIBUTION TRANSFORMER BRAND : LG KVA : 100 TYPE : POLE CONVENTIONAL, DOUBLE BUSHING (BRAND NEW) AGENCY PRICE: P 128,000.00/unit

You may secure the Pre-qualification Requirements from the office of the Finance Department, ZAMCELCO Complex in Putik, this city anytime during office hours and submit the same upon completion of all requirements thereof.

Submission of the Pre-qualification Requirements shall not be later than 5:00 pm of December 7, 2007 and no documents appertaining thereto, shall be accepted thereafter.

All applicants will be duly notified as to the results of the pre-qualification eligibility process. Only those who are pre-qualified will be allowed to participate in the bidding. A post-qualification may be conducted accordingly hereafter.

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(Sgd.) REINERIO R. RAMOS
General Manager

(PDI--December 3 & 4, 2007)

People, Events & Products

'Pamaskong Handog ng Kabayan' takes center stage in SM Batangas

THE PROVERBIAL RED CARPET HAS started to roll out in sprawling SM Batangas City for the staging of a weekend Christmas bazaar dubbed "Pamaskong Handog ng Kabayan", one of the highlights of several events lined up for the 50th anniversary of leading Batangas-based Bangko Kabayan come Dec. 8 and 9.

"In line with our thrust of providing innovative ways to help our micro entrepreneurs in doing their business, we offer this fair for them to expose products—which they either produce or distribute—to the consuming public in a highly commercialized venue," said Cristina M. Ganzon, Bangko Kabayan marketing manager. "It's also our way of thanking them for their loyalty to the bank."

A first-of-its-kind activity the bank could offer to its over 8,000 microfinance loan clients, the tiangge is designed to provide a weekend of solidarity while presenting various skills seminars during the day and a variety show and grand raffle draw in the evening. "This is definitely a weekend affair for everyone," Ganzon reiterated.

Open for the general public, the two-day bazaar will feature a total of 80 booths—70 of which are intended for the exhibition and selling of pre-approved food and handicraft items of the bank's microfinance clients from both Kabayan (individual) and Kapitan (group) centers as well as SBE patrons, while 10 for sponsors.

A commercial and an educational affair as well, the "Pamaskong Handog ng Kabayan" will also bring mind- and skills-enriching seminars to exhibitors and the public such as: (Day 1) B-meg Talk on Hog Raising and Century Tuna Cooking Show; as well as (Day 2) ABS-CBN Bayan Foundation Program Skills Training, Talk and Games.

And for entertainment enthusiasts, they can have their heads turning with the youth-oriented battle of the band "Musikabataan 2007" and the kiddie caroling program "Himig Bulilit 2007" on the first and second legs of the event, respectively. Complementing them are the grandiose fireworks display, Atikha Puppet Show and exciting raffle draws courtesy of the bank and sponsors.

Bangko Kabayan will conclude the two-day event in a meaningful citation of its two loyal micro entrepreneur clients who have finally been given the elusive Citigroup Microentrepreneur of the Year Award. They are Virginia Dimayuga, the Masikap awardee for her banana chips and coated peanuts business; and Allan Geron, the Maunlad awardee for his successful bakery venture with a grocery extension that includes selling feeds and rice.

"We are truly proud of them both. With their awards, we finally won the Microentrepreneur of the Year Award of Citigroup, of which we have been a finalist ever since we started joining. It's our first time to actually win this award—in perfect time of our Golden Anniversary," the bank's marketing manager stressed.

Given the various activities lined up, plus the strategic location of SM Batangas City, an expected 10,000 participants will patronize the two-day bazaar, including luminaries invited to grace the event from the local government, the bank's partners and showbiz personality Ogie Alcasid.

"Pamaskong Handog ng Kabayan" is sponsored by Globe, SM Batangas City, official radio partner Spirit FM, Petnet and Prudential.

For inquiries, call (043) 311-1420, (043) 311-1323, (043) 311-1303, (043) 311-1814; or log on to www.bangkokabayan.com.

3rd Reader's Digest Pen Awards launched

EVERYONE HAS A STORY TO TELL. NO matter how ordinary, every human being has an experience waiting to be read.

This year, Reader's Digest Philippines announces the start of the 3rd Pen Awards, a sought-after essay writing competition that has been giving recognition to young, aspiring Filipino writers ages 8 to 16 years old since it started in 2006. The competition is co-sponsored by Cosmos Bazar Inc, exclusive distributor of Pilot Pens in the Philippines.

The 3rd Reader's Digest Philippines Pen Awards carries the theme "Family Rituals and Traditions". Essay topics may range from weekend family reunions, memorable annual holidays or routine activities such as doing your daily chores, what makes these family affairs special and how they bring the members closer to one another. The article may be funny, moving, interesting, off-beat or something that will move, inspire and engage readers.

Express yourself with a maximum of 1,000 words. All contributions must be typed and double-spaced, accompanied by a cover page that would contain complete information of your name, age, address, telephone number and name of school. Entries may be sent to the Reader's Digest Philippines office at Unit 1004 Jafer Place Eisenhower Street, Greenhills, San Juan, or e-mail Marianne_Sabillo@readersdigest.com.

Winning participants and the schools they represent will receive cash prizes, gifts from Pilot, Reader's Digest products and trophies. Top 25 entries will receive special gifts from Reader's Digest. Schools with more than 20 entries will receive a special certificate of participation and a special gift.

Submission of entries for the 3rd Pen Awards is ongoing until Jan. 30, 2008. The announcement of winners is on March 15.

More details of the contest are on www.rdasia.com, or call 448-7612, 928-4976 or text 0921-7468068.

'Paskong Pasko sa Metro Manila 2007'

THE DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM IS optimistic that the "Paskong Pasko sa Metro Manila 2007", a Yuletide season project spearheaded by DOT National Capital Region and Metro Manila's 17 local government units will boost its efforts of promoting Metro Manila as a major tourism destination in the country.

The project, which is open to the public, was highlighted by a lantern parade on Dec. 1 at Roxas Boulevard from Baywalk to Rizal Park.

Participants from the local government units and other entities are pitted against each other in creating the most authentic and attractive lantern design vying for the "Best in Lantern Making and Parade" contest that is ongoing until Dec. 15. A Texter's Choice Award for the most voted lantern is a special feature of the lantern-making contest. A marching band festival and best chorale group are also part of the Season's event.

"Paskong Pasko sa Metro Manila 2007" has the support of Smart Communications Inc, McDonald's, and Megaworld.

OBITUARIES

REX BARRIDO BUENSUCESO

Joined his Creator
on November 29, 2007 at the age of 60.

His bereaved wife **Azucena "Babes"**; children **Sharon, Ryan, Kristine** and **Sean**; brothers **Bob, Ike** and **Berlin**; sisters **Barbara Ladrido** and **Tess Matsui**; mother-in-law **Nelly M. Miravalles**; brothers-in-law; sisters-in-law; cousins; other relatives and friends request your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Sanctuarium, (Chapel Cattleya) Araneta, corner Quezon Avenue, Quezon City.

Cremation will be on Wednesday, December 05, 2007 at 10:30 a.m., Heritage Park - Global City, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig after the 8:00 a.m. Holy Mass at the Sanctuarium.

"Eternal life will swallow up that which can die. God made us for this very reason and He has given us the Spirit as a guarantee that we will live again." —2 Corinthians 5:4-5

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VMUF 50th year

SOME 20,000 ALUMNI and balikbayans who graduated from the Virgen Milagrosa University Foundation (VMUF) in San Carlos City, Pangasinan, will converge on Feb. 8, 2008 when the university celebrates its Golden anniversary and grand alumni homecoming. Dr. Angelo B. Juan, VMUF alumni relations director and overall chair of the activity, expressed optimism that hundreds of graduates who are now employed abroad will come home to attend the university reunion. VMUF was founded in 1958 by the late educators and trailblazing couple Dr. Martin P. Posadas and Dr. Rosalina Quebral-Posadas. The school continues to scale greater heights of success including national, regional and local sports and academic competitions. It was named after the Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal, the patroness of the Virgen Milagrosa Complex. Juan said that one of the highlights of this affair is a Ballroom Dancing Party and evening surprises to be led by university officials headed by Dr. Ma. Lilia P. Juan, university president. Log on to www.vmuf.edu.ph, or e-mail vmuf50years@yahoo.com.

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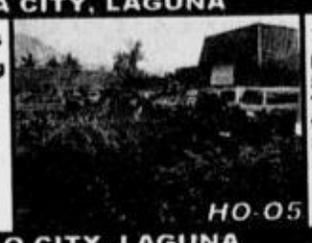
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HO-00

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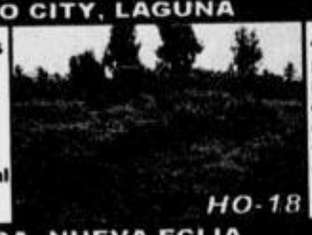
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DAS-04

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LIPA CITY, BATANGAS
9,062 sq meters
Located at Calamias, Lipa City, Batangas. Perfect location for Farm and Residential Development

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- Maintain the appearance of the fleet to corporate standard

REPAIR
- Inspect and repair machines at depot or on-site as required to ensure conformance with manufacturers' specification and company policy

CUSTOMER CARE
- Maintain high levels of personal appearance uniform and personal protective equipment as issued
- Act as an ambassador for the company, providing a high standard of customer care and being polite at all times
- Relay appropriate customer queries to depot staff as required
- Handover machines to customers and familiarize customers with machine operation in accordance with company procedure

ADMINISTRATION
- Accurately complete all relevant paperwork including engineer's report, off hire / pre-delivery inspection and service sheets

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ANNOUNCEMENT

The Supreme Court of the Philippines announces the opening of the position of **DEPUTY COURT ADMINISTRATOR.**

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1. A natural-born Filipino citizen; at least 40 years of age; and for 15 years or more, a Judge of a lower court or engaged in the practice of law in the Philippines (Art. VIII, Sec. 7 of the Constitution, adopted by Sec. 3 of PD No. 828 as amended by PD No. 842);
2. Be of proven competence, integrity, probity and industry; and
3. Possess a track record as an administrator or an executive.

In case of recommendation, the recommendee shall conform with the recommendation. Applications/recommendations must be submitted **NOT LATER THAN DECEMBER 10, 2007, at 12:00 P.M.** to:

ATTY. MA. LUISA D. VILLARAMA
Clerk of Court, Supreme Court
Padre Faura, Manila
Tel. No. 523-6558
Fax No. 525-32-08

December 3, 2007.

MA. LUISA D. VILLARAMA
Clerk of Court

(PDI--Dec. 3, 2007)

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- *Banking and Finance (3-6 years experience in special projects/ project finance work; preferably in the utilities, infrastructure and transportation sectors)*

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We are also looking for a Trademark Paralegal and Legal Secretaries with at least 2 years experience in secretarial or administrative work, computer-literate, with good oral & written communication skills, detail-oriented, systematic and trustworthy. Please send your application letter and resumé with a 2x2 picture to P.O. Box # 1578 MCPO.

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E-mail : cpa@cpa.mozcom.com
Telephone : 232-1461 to 63 • 231-6856 to 57
Fax No. : 231-6848

AN INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Cebu Port Authority (CPA), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites all interested bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the Procurement of Janitorial/Utility Services for CY 2008.

The Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) is **FOURTEEN MILLION ONE HUNDRED FIFTY SIX THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED NINETY ONE PESOS (P14,156,791.00).**

Bidding Documents may be purchased from the BAC Secretariat upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of THREE THOUSAND PESOS (P3,000.00) starting **4-11 December 2007.**

Pre-Bid Conference shall be held on **18 December 2007,** 2 p.m. at the CPA Conference Room.

Bids and eligibility requirements must be submitted to the BAC Secretariat on or before 2 p.m. on **03 January 2008** at the CPA Conference Room, 2nd Floor, CIP Complex, North Reclamation Area, Cebu City. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security. **(Late bids shall not be accepted.)**

The Cebu Port Authority (CPA) reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process, or to reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

(Sgd.) **MARIO G. TAN**
BAC Chairman

Noted by:

(Sgd.) **ANGELO C. VERDAN**
General Manager

(PDI–Dec. 3, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
CEBU PORT AUTHORITY
CIP Complex, Serging Osmeña Boulevard,
North Reclamation Area, Cebu City
E-mail : cpa@cpa.mozcom.com
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AN INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Cebu Port Authority (CPA), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites all interested bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the Provision of the Health Care Maintenance Service for CY 2008 covering employees (168) and their qualified dependents.

The Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) is **TWO MILLION SIX HUNDRED EIGHTY EIGHT THOUSAND PESOS (P2,688,000.00).**

Bidding Documents may be purchased from the BAC Secretariat upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of TWO THOUSAND PESOS (P2,000.00) starting **4-11 December 2007.**

Pre-Bid Conference shall be held on **19 December 2007,** 2 p.m. at the CPA Conference Room.

Bids and eligibility requirements must be submitted to the BAC Secretariat on or before 2 p.m. on **04 January 2008** at the CPA Conference Room, 2nd Floor, CIP Complex, North Reclamation Area, Cebu City. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security. **(Late bids shall not be accepted.)**

The Cebu Port Authority (CPA) reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process, or to reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

(Sgd.) **MARIO G. TAN**
BAC Chairman

Noted by:

(Sgd.) **ANGELO C. VERDAN**
General Manager

(PDI–Dec. 3, 2007)

BCDA

INVITATION TO SUBMIT PROPOSALS

The Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA), jointly with the National Police Commission (NAPOLCOM), under the Joint Development Steering Commitee (JDSC), is inviting interested proponents to participate in the development of the NAPOLCOM site located at Fort Bonifacio, with an approximate area of 7.1 hectares. This property is titled in the name of the Republic of the Philippines-National Police Commission, is one of those excluded from sale under R.A. 7227 and is therefore subject to privatization only through joint development arrangements where the titles shall not be transferred to third parties. With NAPOLCOM as the primary beneficiary of the property pursuant to various executive orders, the proposals must address the housing and office requirements of NAPOLCOM and its mother department, the Department of Interior and Local Government. These areas for office and housing requirements of NAPOLCOM, DILG and their attached agencies must be proximate to the present DILG offices and must be convenient for the use of these agencies.

Interested proponents may submit their Letters of Interest to BCDA and can purchase the Terms of Reference (TOR) that outlines, among others, the requirements that will enable proponents to participate in this project.

The TOR for this project will be ready for distribution to interested proponents by November 29, 2007 at the BCDA offices. A non-refundable cost of the TOR is Php50,000.00 payable to the BCDA in Cash or Manager's Check.

A conference among interested proponents is tentatively set for 2:00 p.m., December 13, 2007. The objective of the conference is to discuss the property and other clarifications from interested proponents. Interested proponents will be informed of the final schedule and venue of the conference through contact numbers submitted to the BCDA.

Interested proponents can direct their inquiries to:

THE CHAIRMAN
JOINT DEVELOPMENT STEERING COMMITTEE (JDSC)
BCDA Corporate Centre
2nd Floor, Bonifacio Technology Center
31st St., Bonifacio Global City, Taguig City

or they can contact Ms. Alleen R. Zosa or Mr. Dean Santiago at telephone numbers 816-10-16 or 816-66-66.

(Sgd.) **RONALDO V. PUNO**
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DAWNING OF 'WHITE-LABELED' ATMS

A place to withdraw money even in remote areas

By Doris C. Dumlao

A HOTEL guest withdraws from an Encash ATM located in the Atlantis Dive Resort and Hotel in Puerto Galera

IMAGINE GOING OFF IN SOME faraway island in the country and wishing to extend the vacation for a few more days. But you've run out of cash to rent a boat for island-hopping, or buying exotic seafood from the local market or to tipping the masseur.

Now think of a civil servant, a teacher, a soldier or a retiree living or stationed in a fifth-class municipality somewhere in the countryside who has to travel to the *poblacion* tens of kilometers away just to find an automated teller machine and get cash for the household's sustenance.

Unfortunately, there are many areas in the country where ATMs are not easy to find.

After all, there's a global trend that banks are investing less in these machines. The machines are meant more to provide service to clients and banks usually do not make a profit from these. As such, they won't relish the idea of installing such machines in far-flung areas where there's likely to be few customers and low usage volumes.

Thus dawned the concept of third party or nonbank ATM providers. Encash, the Philippines' first independent deployer of ATMs, anchored its business model based on the basic need for cash in an economy where over 90 percent of transactions are cash-based and where many areas do not have ATMs. As of end-September, there were about 20.6 million ATM cardholders in the country but not enough ATMs to serve them, especially those in the rural areas.

Elsewhere around the world, such a business model has been successful especially since banks are outsourcing more of their functions. It's doing well even in rich countries where people are more used to credit or debit card-based transactions.

"Essentially, we are in rural areas where there is no commercial bank but there are cardholders. Our concept is white-labeled ATMs [terminals that do not carry the brand of any bank]. We serve anybody with a card wishing to make a withdrawal in a location where there's no ATM," says Encash president Eric Severino.

Since Encash is not a bank and serves the markets not attractive to banks 24/7, it has to charge a convenience fee that's higher compared to bank-owned ATMs. It's pretty much a premium a customer has to pay for buying at a convenience store instead of a supermarket.

Its average charge is about P25 per withdrawal (on top of what the bank normally charges), but the fee can vary between P1 and P99 per transaction.

"Our fees are going to be location category-dependent. If the ATM is going to be located in resorts, it's going to be more expensive because volume is lower," he says.

So far, Encash has signed up 19 rural banks as partners for the business. It has also hooked up with the Megalink ATM network.

"We started with rural banks at the beginning because they can provide domicile for the ATMs, secure space and at the same time easy accessibility to cash. In the first place, we'll open a deposit with a rural bank and that same deposit will be out into the ATMs," Severino says.

The partner banks pay a certain fee to join the network but they also get a share of the revenues per transaction.

Encash, which started the white-labeled ATM network in May 2006, is capitalized at P90 million. A new foreign group is set to buy into the company and infuse another $3 million.

The company has so far only 10 of these ATMs but under its rollout plan, it should have 200 more by next year.

But will people pay a premium for ATM proximity?

In one of Encash' pilot ATMs in Tiaong, Quezon, Severino reports that people are lining up and there are so many repeat users because there are no other ATMs elsewhere.

For this location, a customer pays P35-P25 to Encash and P10 to the cardholder's own network.

"But the people are telling us, if they have to go to San Pablo or Sariyaya they have to spend for fare money, take *merienda*, spend time traveling back and forth, so P35 is cheap. And these are not your class AB people," Severino says.

Severino is a veteran IT guy with experience in supplying ATMs as well as in telecommunications. From these infrastructure sectors, he says he acquired the discipline of investing heavily at the start and recovering the money at a later time, indicating that Encash will be patiently nourished until economies of scale are attained. Payback for each ATM set up is about 1.5 years while for the whole infrastructure, about three to four years.

He also worked briefly with ATM network BancNet before putting up Encash with partners Raymond Go and Mike Mapa.

Encash owns the ATM switch and the data center. Apart from releasing cash, the ATMs can also service bills payment, balance inquiry and cash transfer.

"Our ATMs can do everything that a bank ATM does except accept deposit because remember we're not a bank," Severino says.

To date, however, withdrawals gobble up the biggest share of transactions at 70 percent, while inquiries comprise about 27 percent. The balance of three percent consists of other transactions like bills payment, funds transfer and the like.

Because Encash is a newcomer into the ATM business, the machines have become more sophisticated compared to earlier generations. Their machines, he proudly says, are smart card-ready if and when bank issuers make a leap to that technology.

Smart cards provide a means of effecting business transactions in a flexible, secure way with minimal human intervention. For instance, these chips can facilitate contactless transactions like the cards used in metrorail train stations in wealthy countries.

The beauty of the business model, Severino says, is that if one location doesn't prove to be viable, Encash can simply uproot the machine and transfer it somewhere else. There are also ways to expand further without coughing up more money.

"We can actually say to the rural bank, lend us money and then the collateral will be the ATM. In the worst case, the bank will still have the ATM," he says.

After rolling out ATMs in rural banks, the next wave of expansion for Encash will be in gas stations, public markets and in countryside shopping malls. In the future, Encash also aspires to go regional and roll out this business model in neighboring countries like Vietnam.

"Even in the US where everyone has alternative to physical cash in the western part of the world, the thinking is people don't use cash anymore, but this model is extremely successful even there ... If we fail here, we'll be the first in the world to fail," Severino says in jest.

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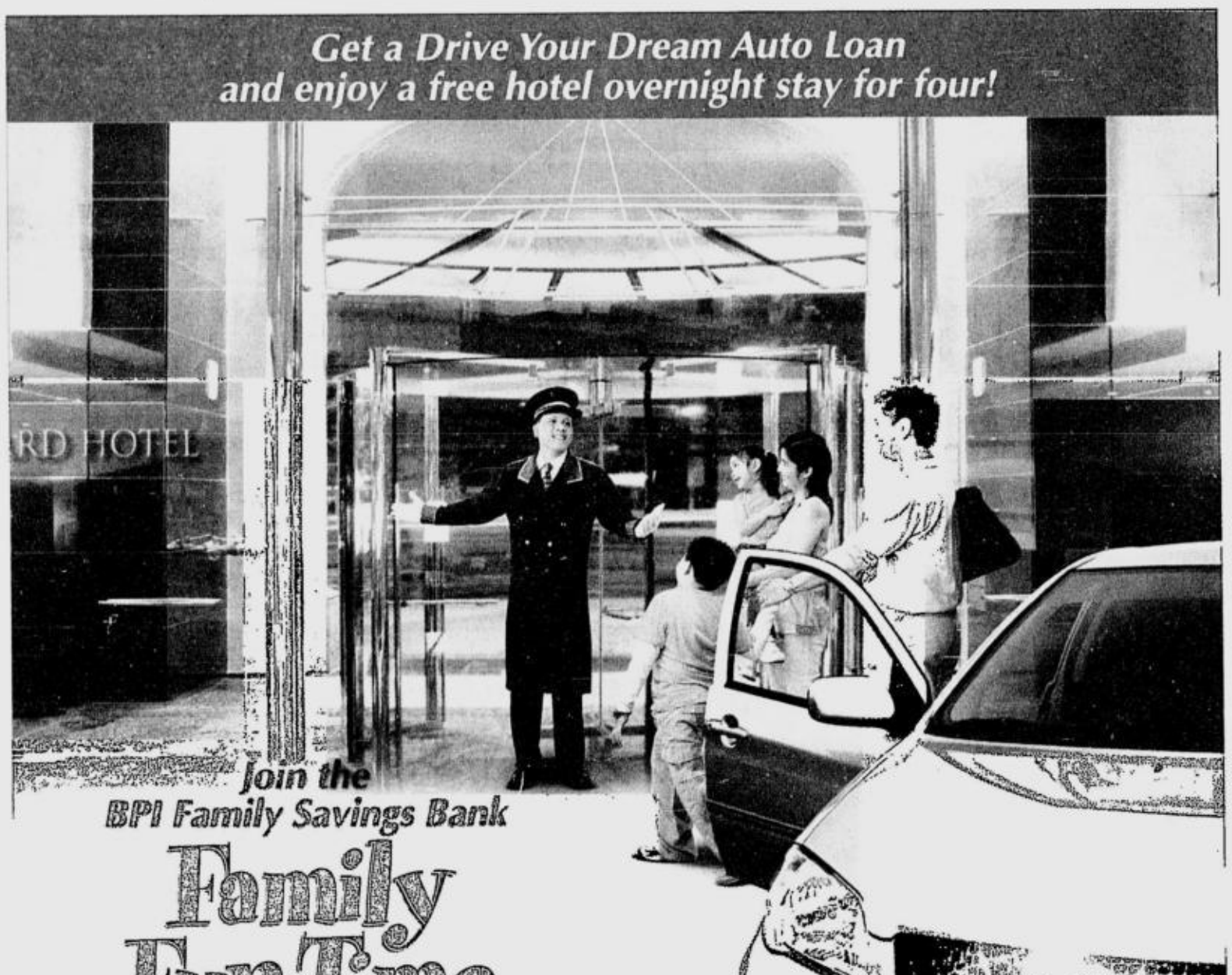

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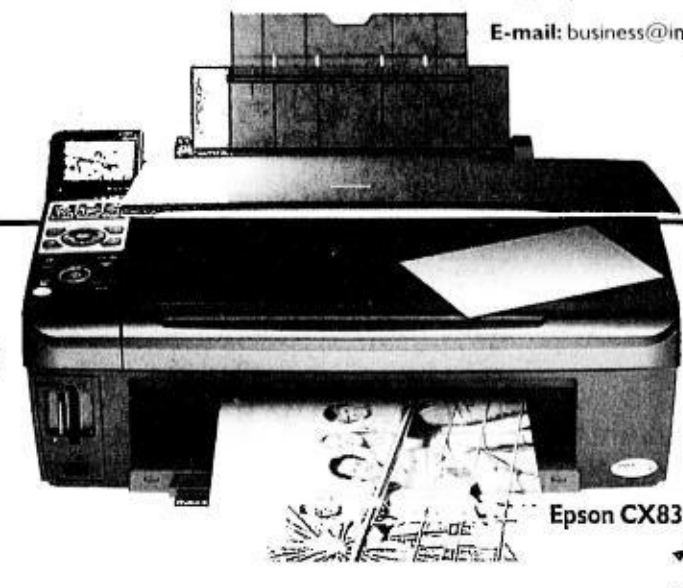


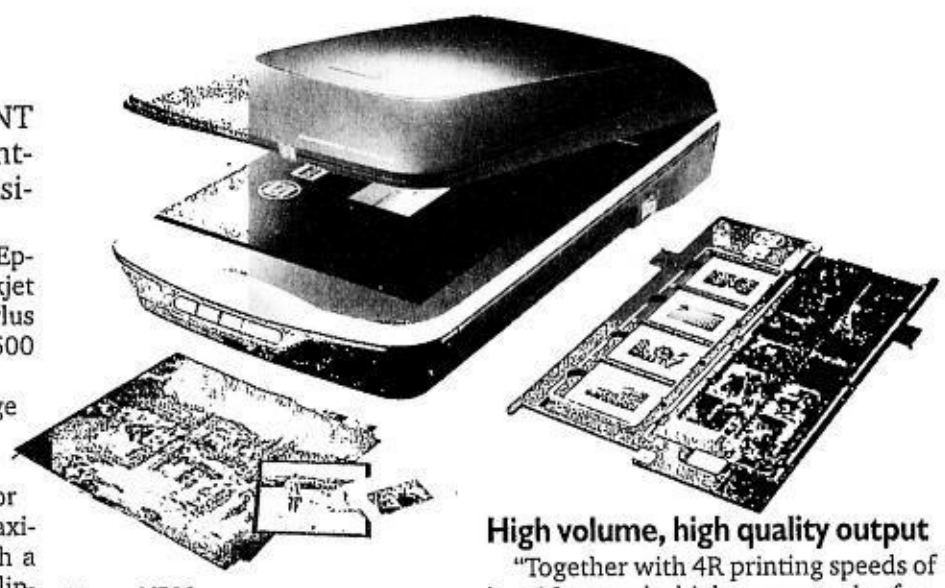
Epson CX8300

By Charles E. Buban

FOR IMAGING GIANT Epson, speeding up the printing process is key to any business' efficiency and profit.

No wonder speed is highlighted in Epson's latest offering of multifunction inkjet printers namely the Stylus CX8300, Stylus CX7300, Stylus C110 and PerfectionV500 Photo flatbed color image scanner.

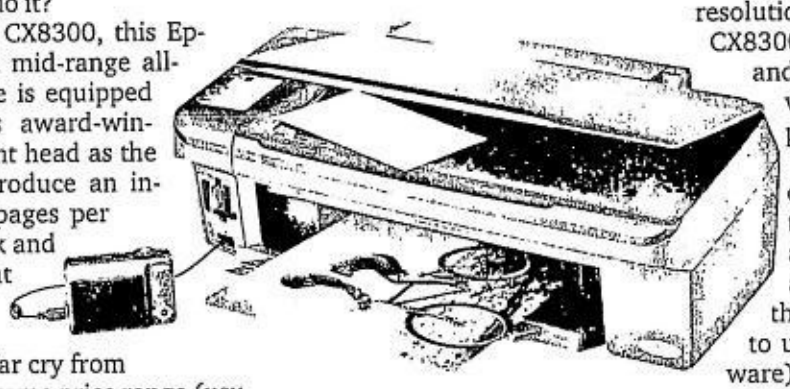
"Every day, we are faced with a deluge of deadlines, quotas and requirements that have to be met. Since every minute and second counts, one has to act fast or much better, acquire tools that could maximize the amount of time spent on such a task," said Mike Mondragon, Epson Philippines senior manager for corporate sales.



Epson V500

So how did Epson do it?

In the case of the CX8300, this Epson's most advanced mid-range all-in-one device to date is equipped with the company's award-winning Micro-Piezo print head as the engine that could produce an incredible rate of 32 pages per minute for both black and color documents at resolutions of up to 5,760 x 1,440 dots per inch, which is a far cry from other printers in the same price range (usually it's 4,800 x 1,200 dpi).



Epson CX7300

High volume, high quality output

"Together with 4R printing speeds of just 19 seconds, high copy speeds of up to 30 copies per minute and scanning resolutions of up to 1,200 dpi, the CX8300 is indeed perfect for home and office clients looking for high volume yet high quality output," said Mondragon.

Another interesting feature of the CX8300 is its 2.5 inch tiltable LCD display that serves as a visual feedback when you attempt to print photos through a memory card (no need to use a PC or image-editing software).

Also, using the CX8300's one-touch buttons, one can manage image-editing functions and confirm print jobs without the need to connect to a PC.

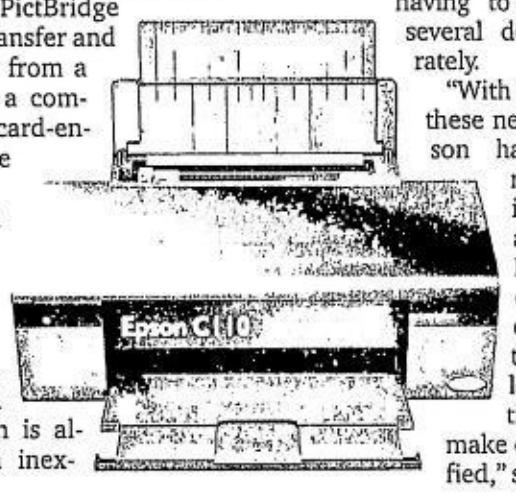
Supports multiple formats

The CX8300 supports a multitude of memory card slots for formats like CompactFlash, MicroDrive, Memory Stick, Secure Digital and Multimedia Card.

Minus the LCD viewer, the LX7300 performs equally well, delivering high quality printing, scanning and copying.

Aimed at the small office/home office and home document markets, the CX7300 also delivers up to 32ppm and photo reproduction of up to 5,760 x 1,440dpi resolution.

It also has a multi-format memory card reader and is PictBridge enabled for easy transfer and printing of photos from a digital camera or a compatible memory card-enabled mobile phone.



The C110, on the other hand, is considered a definitive efficiency-oriented printer, with a default output speed of 25 ppm, which is already fast for an inexpensive multifunction inkjet printer.

Together with the multifunction printers Epson Philippines also unveiled the Perfection V500 Photo, which offers high-quality scans for both prints and film.

Focus on photos

But while the V500 can be an all-purpose scanner, it's more focused on photos, which makes it an excellent choice for anyone who needs to scan a backlog of prints and film (including slides) to digital format.

It features a ReadyScan LED technology that assures very little start-up time as well as an automatic document feed function that eliminates the hassle of having to manually scan several documents separately.

"With the launch of these new products, Epson has once again raised the bar in imaging speed and efficiency. Expect us to continue developing products that will not only lead the competition but also make our client's satisfied," said Mondragon.

Online pictures you can touch

By Riza T. Olchondra

DIGITAL CAMERAS AND CAMERA phones have made taking photos anywhere and anytime a snap, driving the popularity of online web albums. Through these, anybody can quickly upload and share photos with anyone in the world.

But nothing beats the nostalgia of holding high-quality, physical prints in one's hands.

Seeing the need to converge digital picture-taking with physical printing, Internet company Mozcom has integrated its online photo developing system, Picatoo (www.picatoo.com) with one of the most popular online web albums: Google Photos.

"The World-Wide Web is getting more and more 'social,'" said Dick Chiang of Mozcom. "We see people sharing their photos to strangers in social networking sites like Picasa, Flickr, Friendster, Facebook and many others. Picatoo is embracing this phenomenon by making it simple for people to order physical prints or photo creations out of their own photos."

With the integration in place, users of Google Photos, also known as Picasa (picasaweb.google.com), no longer need to re-download their photos from their web album and re-upload this to Mozcom's Picatoo for printing.

Users just have to go straight to Picatoo and retrieve the images from Picasa directly. This significantly saves time and allows for faster image transfer.

Once the transfer is complete, a user can order prints or use the images to order photo creations, such as picture books, mugs, mouse pads, t-shirts and many other possibilities.

"We are very excited to support Picasa as it is one of the most popular web albums out there," Chiang said. "With Google's excellent developer support and software development resources, we are looking forward for more features to come."

Picatoo prints photos using Fuji YKL's industry-leading Frontier digital minilab. Fuji Crystal Archive paper is used to ensure the clearest and longest-lasting prints.

"We share in YKL's commitment to making the best quality prints," Chiang added. "At the same time, we are committed to making Picatoo the most technologically advanced online photo printing solution in the country. We already support Flickr and Picasa, and we expect to add more support for other popular online albums in the months to come."

Picatoo is owned and operated by Mozcom, the Philippines' first commercial Internet Service Provider, in partnership with Fuji YKL Color Lab. Mozcom owns and maintains a variety of e-commerce sites that caters to the interests of today's generation.

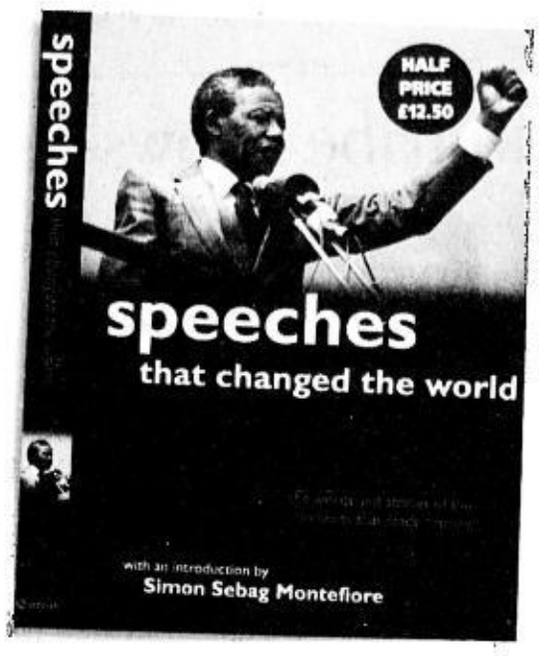
These cyberstores are equipped with PayEasy, Mozcom's award-winning online payment system. Established more than 50 years ago, YKL Color Lab is the exclusive distributor of Fujifilm products in the country.

For more information, visit http://www.picatoo.com or email info@picatoo.com.

Know the hero or villain behind famous speeches

"Speeches That Changed History"
By Cambridge Editorial Partnership
Quercus Publishing Plc, 2007 Edition

By Dante M. Velasco
Contributor



A great speech does not just capture the truth of its era; it can also capture the big lie

RHETORIC CAN BE AN INVALUABLE tool of the heroic and the heel. Through the powers of persuasion, a leader can lead his people to a "glorious sunlit path of liberty," as Martin Luther King once put it, or by deception or folly when a people are misled to follow the way that leads to destruction or shame.

EXECUTIVE READ

This reflection on the power of the spoken word came across in bold relief only the other day when two actors on the Philippine political stage spoke on television solemnly declaring their lofty ideals for the people. One, in the company of military cohorts and civilian allies, barged into a five-star hotel and piously declared his solemn duty to be faithful to the constitutional mandate that the military, to which he belongs, is the "protector of the people."

Miles away, in the sanctuary of the Presidential Palace, the President exhorted her people to uphold the rule of law and therefore resist the impulse, if any, to join the adventurist soldiers. At that moment, no one could distinguish the heel from the hero. If you judge by their words, you would find the heroic element.

Thus, only history is the better judge. And yet the more sensitive observers know that the one who write the history will decide which one is the hero and which is the villain. It was once said that the terrorist remains a "terrorist" if he does not win the coup or the revolution. Once he wins, he will be hailed hero or heroine—for some time, at least.

This train of thought has been inspired by this book—a collection of speeches—which immediately primes the mind, while reading each speech, to know if it is a scoundrel or a virtuous leader speaking.

"A great speech does not just capture the truth of its era; it can also capture the big lie." Thus goes the first line of the introduction written by accomplished historian and writer Simon Sebag Montefiore.

The featured speeches by famous—or infamous—leaders include Moses, Jesus of Nazareth, Mohammed and St. Francis of Assisi. The name of Napoleon Bonaparte breaths away from George Washington and Thomas Jefferson. It is interesting how the historian views the famous French military strategist: "Emperor Napoleon's 'adieu to the Old Guard' is tear jerking hokum, because he had never put his country before himself and his ambitions had layered the fields of Europe with the young and innocent."

You then realize you are not only being served famous powerful speeches, but you are listening to an iconoclast—one who shatters renowned icons—steering clear of carefully nurtured myths. One more sampler. This is Montefiore's word about a General made famous by his "I shall return" declaration before Filipino soldiers: "General Douglas MacArthur's farewell is magnificent but reeks of vain delusion."

You may hate Montefiore for his ruthless assessment of the man who looked like actor Gregory Peck, but his statement gives you pause. All at once, we are given a lesson in distinguishing the myth from the truth—that is if we can spot the difference.

And yet this book is actually made up of speeches that are "uplifting hymns to democratic freedom that encapsulates the principles of decency and liberty that we cherish," he says.

You can read and reread the speeches of John Kennedy, not only his now famous inaugural speech, but his rousing speech before Berliners where he punctuated every paragraph with "Ich bin ein Berliner." Many years after, you will relate Kennedy's declaration to a powerful rhetorical refrain by Ronald Reagan, telling the Soviets: "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall." Certainly, the anthology is incomplete without the voice of Winston Churchill, known to have inspired the Royal Air Force and the people of England to continue resisting the blitzkrieg of Hitler's forces with his "toil, blood, sweat and tears."

It is also edifying to know that part of the Beatitudes in the Scriptures is featured in this book as a speech of Jesus with such a line as "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

You will actually be introduced to other leaders, not much known for their eloquence, but for their life's 30-year struggles and triumphs, notably, Nelson Mandela. You read about the man who suffered much and so that story illuminates his speech with an exuberant line, "Free at last," and you know such three words speak volumes.

To complete your sense of the era, a compact disc goes with the book. When you play it, you capture the moment. You are transported to an era—a moment of nobility or folly—with a difference. You know better. You know what happened to the "wicked." And you are a co-beneficiary of those who spoke and fought for freedom. You also share the blessing that's handed down from centuries when a compelling truth about us delivers, not enslaves. *(Feedback at dantemvelasco@yahoo.com)*

Protection that comes with savings

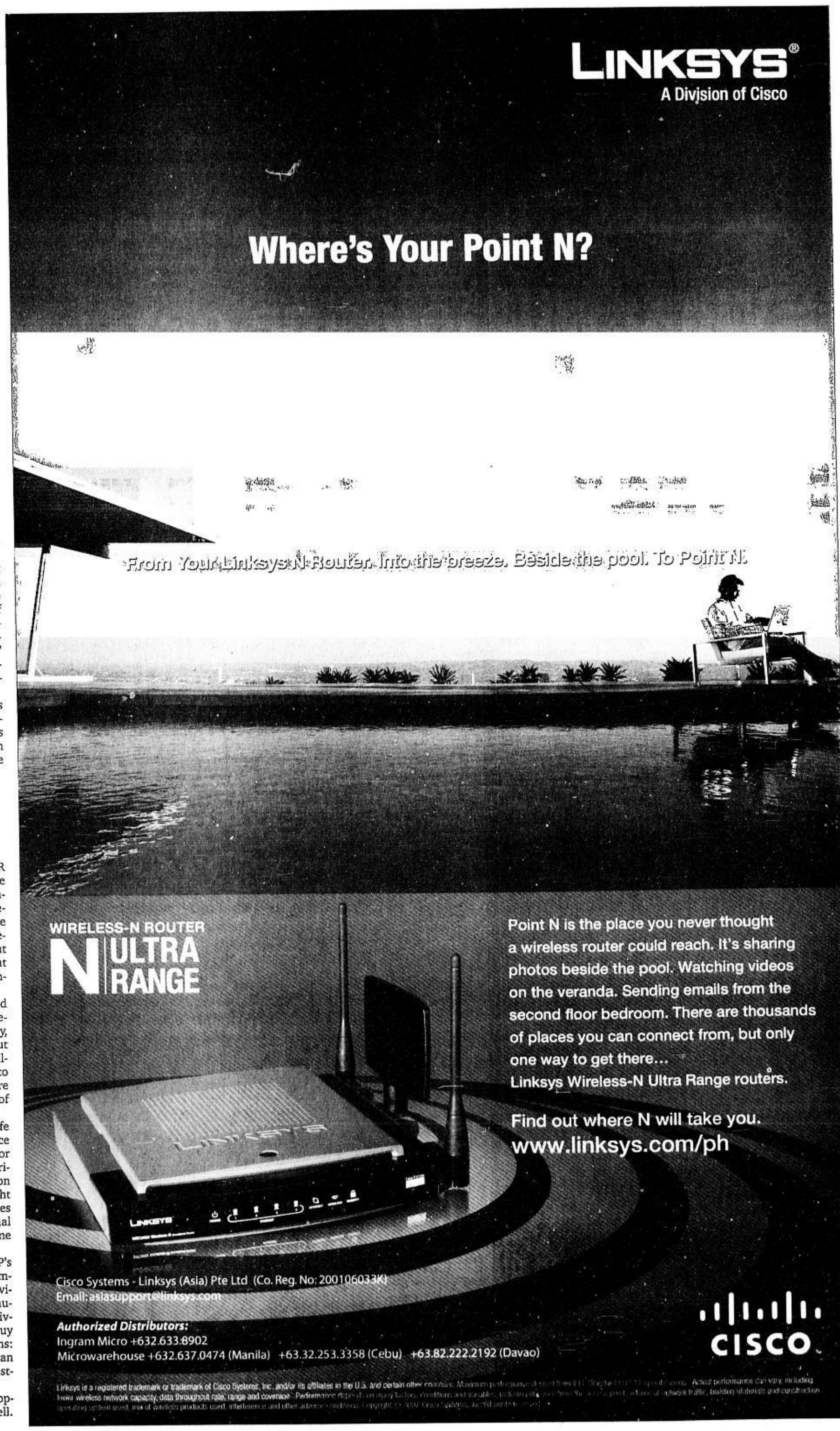
FILIPINOS ARE ARE BECOMING WISER when it comes to money matters. With the conventional wisdom of letting money simply sit in the bank and earn minimum returns with the current interest rates, more and more opt to pool their financial resources in business ventures or stocks. But another kind of profitable investment that is increasingly becoming popular is life insurance.

Traditionally, life insurance is purchased to ensure that your loved ones would remain financially covered should a tragedy, such as an accident or death, befall you. But with the dividend-earning policies available in the market today, at rates of up to eight percent, life insurance becomes more than just protection. It becomes a means of savings as well.

Generali Pilipinas (GP) offers GEN Life Plans. In addition to standard insurance benefits, GEN Life Plans are designed for your maximum convenience. Payment periods are short enough to ease any hassle on your part, but long enough to still be light on the pocket. The 5-Pay Life guarantees protection until age 99, with just 5 annual payments. The 10-Pay Life gives the same assurance for 10 annual payments.

Beyond assurance of protection, GP's GEN Life Plans lets you share in the company's investment earnings through dividends. These cash dividends may accumulate at the rate of up to eight percent, giving you earnings that may be used to buy more insurance; pay for future premiums: or as an extra source of funds which can serve as capital for other profitable investment.

GP's additional insurance coverage options come with additional benefits as well.



BUSINESSMonday

Use of free technology—an Indian tribe shows us the way

MAPPING THE FUTURE

Felicito C. Payumo

YES, THE AMAZON INDIANS DO BETTER than us in using Google Earth, Global Positioning System (GPS), and other technologies in protecting their rainforest and preserving their history and cultural traditions. I recall having read about this in a travel magazine, so I logged on to Google for more information. The Surui Indians and other tribes are aided by improved satellite image in keeping tabs on loggers and miners. "Google Earth is used primarily for vigilance. Indians log on and study images, inch by inch, looking to see where new gold mines are popping up or where deforestation is occurring. We offered the Google Earth team a list of coordinates where it would be helpful to have sharper images," said Vasco van Roosmalen of the Amazon Conservation Team (ACT). But they also use them in cataloguing medicinal plants, hunting grounds, ancestral cemeteries and sacred sites. "We want people to know that these territories are not just empty swaths of green as seen by satellite, but the homes, supermarkets, museums, libraries of a people who depend on these areas for their survival."

Wondering if we could do the same in our country, I clicked on Google Earth and zoomed in on the vast Subic and Bataan forest to check. Not quite, while I could see clearly the airport and buildings in Subic and had fun looking for the rooftop of my house, huge areas of the Bataan forest were shown as a haze. And they were not real time images—there was not a trace yet of the ongoing Subic-Clark-Tarlac Road construction. I am sure the Government or the World Wild Life Fund can ask Google Earth for updated and sharper images just like ACT did for the Amazon Indians.

I also went to the National Mapping and Resource Information Authority (Namria) to ask how we use the satellite images. My findings: we have infrared maps which can be a powerful tool in protecting our environment but we are not aware how the DENR or the local officials use them. To begin with, they cover only certain areas and are not updated. I asked for comparative images of Penablanca in the Sierra Madre or that of the Samar forests where a timber cutting permit to a logging company has been opposed by environmentalists. There was none. It was only the Bataan forests that had images taken both in 1989 and 2002, but none in 2007 or in other years. Still, in comparing the snapshots, the images show graphically what had occurred over the 12 years around Mt. Natib and Mt. Mariveles, a job for which air or ground surveillance would be both expensive and ineffective given the breath and depth of the forests.

The infrared images show the thick vegetation in crimson color. Since it takes a trained eye to spot the changes, I asked the helpful officer of Namria to point out the areas of degradation by encircling them in the second photo. She did. Like a man's balding head, I could see the hair on the nape and sides being shorn upwards. I could also detect some clearing on the crown like an initiation of what would soon be a cleric's tonsure.

Wouldn't these and similar images of the country's protected areas serve the cause of environment protection if posted yearly in the provincial, municipal and barangay halls, and published in national and local newspapers rather than kept in a Government archive? More eyes watching—by the public, the NGOs, etc.—will put pressure on the DENR officers and local officials from the provincial down to the barangay level to protect their watershed. A performance-based evaluation which can be done more objectively with the images than with any self-serving report from the forest rangers or ground patrol should be welcome to DENR Secretary Lito Atienza. This can be our practical contribution to the Conference on Climate Change held in Albay by Gov. Joey Salceda. While the Philippines is not in the league of the United States, Europe or China in carbon emission, it is one of the most threatened of the world's biodiversity hotspots. And since, according to Conservation International, deforestation is responsible for one-fourth of all green house gas emission—more than double the amount from the world's cars and trucks—it is in forest conservation that we can contribute to the fight against global warming.

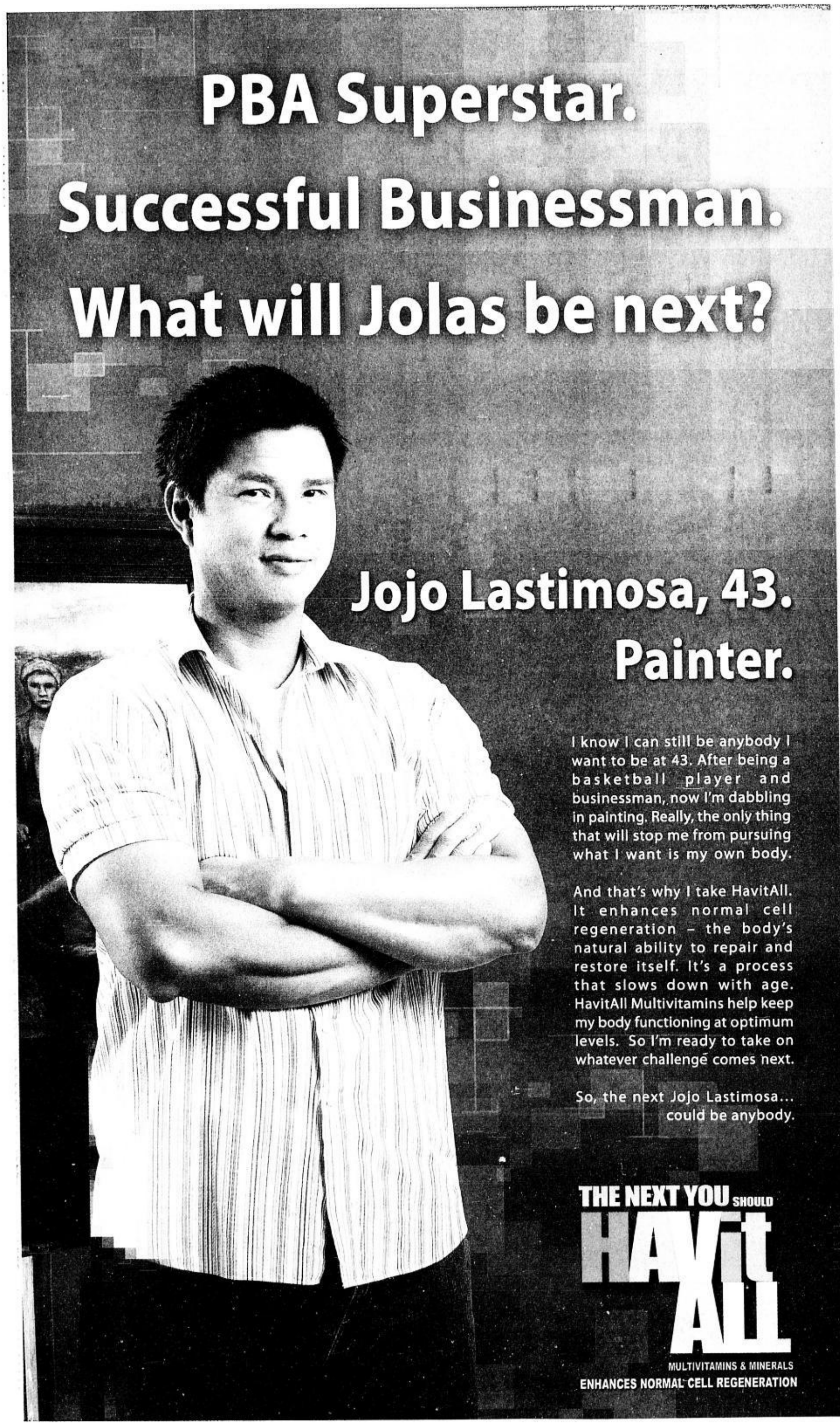
While RP is not in the league of US in carbon emission, it is one of the most threatened biodiversity hotspots

The Amazon Indians have shown us the way. Whether in harnessing the benefits of satellite, cyberspace or the airwaves, we can emulate them on how they employ technology. Our officials want to spend P16 billion for the National Broadband Network (NBN) and P24 billion for Cyber Education, while the Amazon tribes will make use of satellite services for their rainforest protection free. And Google Earth is more than happy to help because they reap good publicity.

We read that the DOTC, while having abandoned the ZTE deal, is still bent on spending money for a national broadband network by inviting the telcos to bid. But I thought the issue is precisely whether or not the government needs to have a dedicated connectivity given that communications backbones from the private sector, as confirmed by both SMART and Globe in a recent Senate hearing, already serve 98 percent of the population? And with respect to the use of technology in education, why spend P18 billion of a total P24 billion Cyber Ed budget for a separate connectivity alone? Why not make use of the other NBN—the Government NBN 4 station—to telecast the lectures of the so-called expert teachers? An hour a day, and five days a week lecture telecast not only to students in schools but to the out of school youth and adults in the homes should fit in the station's program. If the content quality is anywhere close to the USAID supported Knowledge Channel which has successfully penetrated even Mindanao, maybe this distance learning program would even help push the government TV channel's rating one notch up! And in the areas not reached by NBN 4 broadcast, there are the 1501 strong cable TV operators who can be asked to play the DVD copies in their community channels for free. Finally, to the very few remaining schools too remote to be reached either by regular or cable TV—well, no problem—why not just send them DVD copies of the lectures?

Is this an Indian tribe solution? Maybe, but that's what we need!

(The article reflects the personal opinion of the author and does not reflect the official stand of the Management Association of the Philippines. The author previously served as SBMA Chair and Administrator and three-term Representative of the First District of Bataan. He was the principal author of the BOT Law. Feedback at mapsec@globenet.com.ph)



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'Planet Me' to help save Planet Earth

Int'l express service firm shows way to reduce CO_2 emission

TNT Philippines' vice president for human resources Cecil Cacas

Text and photos by Niña Catherine Calleja
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LOS BAÑOS, LAGUNA—TNT Express, an international express service company, admits it contributes to the problem of the environment—claiming that the transport industry is generating almost one-fifth of the world's greenhouse gases, particularly carbon dioxide (CO2).

TNT operates a fleet of 17,652 trucks and vans and 43 planes all over the world and all these vehicles emit CO2.

But the company does not feel indifferent to this global issue. The management believes it must start to act on this.

Thus, Planet Me, an environment advocacy of the company to mitigate global warming by drastically reducing CO2, was launched in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, last Aug. 30.

With its head office located in the Netherlands, TNT has offices in countries in Europe and Asia—including the Philippines.

On Nov. 17, TNT Philippines, which has its local office in Pasay City, launched the local campaigns of Plant Me.

More than 20 of its employees trooped to Mt. Makiling in Los Baños to plant at least 500 seedlings with the assistance of the Ecosystem Research and Development Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Cecil Cacas, TNT Philippines vice president for human resources, tells the INQUIRER that the tree-planting activity was the kick-off of their local initiatives in relation to Planet Me.

She says they chose Mt. Makiling as their tree-planting site because of the reports of flash floods and landslides in the area that they were getting.

Internal changes

Cacas stresses that the tree-planting activity would be a yearly event of the company and could replace some of the usual company outings.

For their activities to be well planned and monitored, an environment and management committee was formed to discuss and plan the local campaigns of the Planet Me.

"We are concentrating now on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and reforestation but we have already done small things in the office," Cacas says.

She says they started segregating their wastes and reusing and recycling the non-biodegradables.

"Whenever we have new hires, we make sure they are oriented to waste segregation as part of our CSR (corporate social responsibility)," she says.

Currently, TNT Philippines has around 400 employees.

Apart from the waste segregation, the company also regularly conducts "carbon count" where it ask employees their water and electricity bills, and how many kilometers they travel from home to work.

From there, they target the reduction of the carbon dioxide emission.

Also, the company monitors the energy consumption.

Cacas said there must be a valid reason whenever the electric and water consumption increased and the only valid reason is an increase in head count.

"We also tried to reduce our business travels. A lot are being done through teleconferencing," she says.

Cacas notes that they had also thought of "car pooling," a way to reduce fuel consumption in which they encourage those employees who live in the same area to travel together.

TNT is aiming to lower the emissions by

'PLANET ME'/ B3-2

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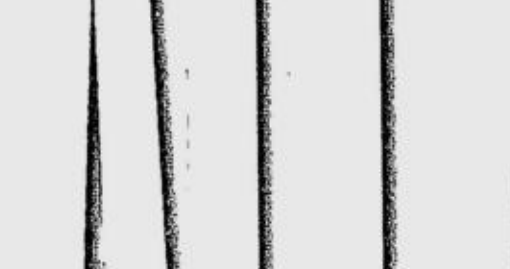

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'Planet Me' to help save Planet Earth

From page B3-1

AROUND 20 employees of TNT Philippines plant at least 500 saplings in Mt. Makiling

6 percent in 2011 from the 43.5 kilotons that its 6,100 company cars had emitted in 2006.

Worldwide campaign

Under the Planet Me campaign, TNT works on reducing its dependency on fossil fuels by exploring alternatives like biofuels, electric, hybrids, biogas, and hydrogen-related technologies.

Based on TNT reports, the Mail Division in Amsterdam now uses 56 vehicles on 100-percent rapeseed oil, a type of biodiesel that allows for a 50-percent reduction of CO_2 emissions.

In India, on the other hand, the TNT Express Division launched a pilot project using biofuel for its delivery vehicles. Three biofuel trucks were tested by trained drivers.

Now, TNT in India has decided to operate 20 more biofuel trucks.

TNT also addresses its aviation's contribution to global warming.

"In 2006, 51 percent of TNT's CO_2 emissions were generated by our 44 airplanes. As our business grows, this impact will, too," TNT reports said.

TNT promised to solve the problem by "optimizing our operations to improve the fuel efficiency of our air and ground fleet." It will also collaborate with the aeronautics industry to fasten the development of fuel-efficient technologies and alternative energy sources.

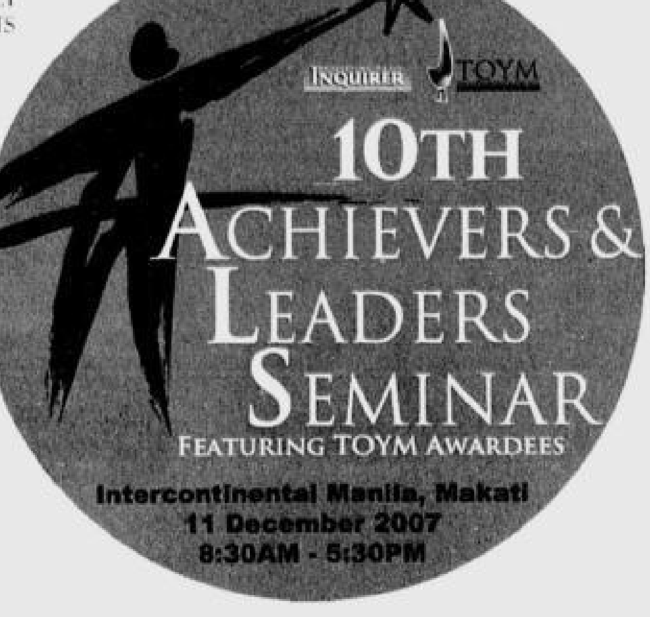
TNT also aims to reduce CO_2 emissions from business travel by 20 percent by providing 76 locations with video conferencing facilities.

Because of this, Tandberg, manufacturer of video conferencing systems, gave the first Tandberg Green Award to TNT.

TNT also plans to acquire alternative vehicles but Cacas says it will surely entail costs.

She stresses that for the meantime, their company ensures that their vehicles pass the emission tests.

INQUIRER PROUDLY PRESENTS



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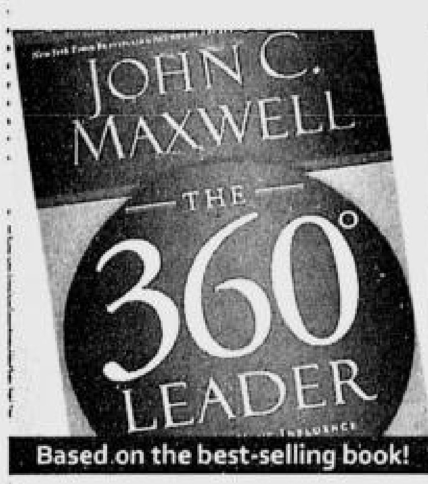

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ANTHONY PANGILINAN
Anthony Pangilinan is Director and Chief Trainer of Inspire Leadership Consultancy, Inc. He was adjudged "best facilitator" in the April 2005 Developing the Leader Within You Train-the-Trainer Workshop in Atlanta, Georgia. He is also Chairman of the Board and Chief Disturber of BusinessWorks and EVP of The PLDT Foundation, Inc.

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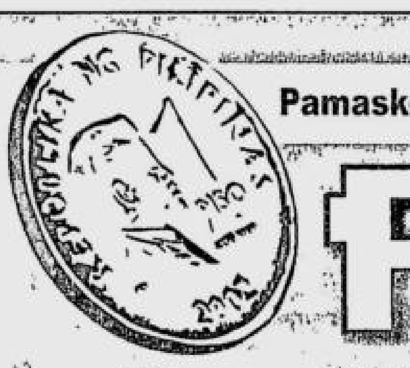

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Real estate: It's a big world after all

By Romeo J. Pajarillo
Contributor

A MONTH AGO WHEN Tourism Secretary Joseph "Ace" H. Durano was in Germany, a university professor told him that every year he spends a month in his time-share unit in a condominium in Mactan.

That German is in the market segment that Durano is targeting for tourism promotion. "He is a long-stay tourist," he said. "The long-stay tourist is not here for retirement, but he spends his vacations here because he owns a second home. He is a captive market year after year. We must get more like him."

The tourism secretary told this story to Susan Barlin, a Fil-Am real estate professional who paid him a courtesy call last week. Once a nine-year-old girl in Malabon who sold banana-Q, Barlin now heads her own Southern California-based real estate company that markets and invests in real estate properties in the United States and in Europe. She is in town as president of Asia International Real Estate Expo and Conference (AIREEC).

AIREEC, an affiliate of the world's largest trade show for real estate in Madrid, fits Durano's idea of just one venue where he could pitch for second homes—resorts, time-share units, villas, residential villages—to foreigners. Participants arriving are from different sectors of the global real estate industry to attend AIREEC on Dec. 6-10, 2007, at the Philippine International Convention Center. They are property consultants, brokers, project developers, investment counselors, architects and engineers, other professionals and their staff from the 300 sectors related to the global real estate industry. The DOT, the Department of Trade and Industry, and the Department of Foreign Affairs are supporting the international event.

One big market of long-stay tourists for Durano, said Barlin, are people who are 65 years or older. Barlin, chair of Barlin and

BARLIN

Associates, is familiar with this market segment, having marketed and invested in second-homes in Europe and the United States.

She estimated a total market size of more than 83 million people who are of ages 65 and above. This is broken down into 45 million in the United States; 20, Europe; 3.8, Canada, and 15, spread out in Asia over South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Hong Kong and Japan). This target market is worth $42 billion even if only one percent (or 838,000) of these targets buys a second home at $50,000 per.

Another big market is the baby boomers (born between 1946 and 1964) now hurtling towards retirement. According to Barlin, the Boomers generation has seen the greatest wealth transfer from one generation to the next. Their wealthy parents have been bequeathing old fortunes to the Boomers. This is in addition to the wealth that the Boomers themselves have been piling up with their own sweat.

The boomers, she said, believed that advances in health care are going to make them live 20 or 25 years longer than their parents do. But if they are to outlive their pension funds or cope with the rising costs of health care, the boomers are investing now in real estate assets for their appreciating values. With second homes in Panama, Costa Rica or the Philippines, they can enjoy their vacations cheap and get away from it all.

The global market is so big that local property companies don't have to worry about competition. The game is collaboration between many more Philippine companies and foreign allies to win global clients.

"Even as local companies pursue the OFW market, they can be partners with foreign real estate professionals," she said. "They can do cross-promotions of vacation properties in the Philippines and abroad, leverage on each other's marketing strength, share research and development costs or package innovative real estate products to help clients enjoy retirement or holidays."

The commercial real estate business is already a global business. With information accessible at Internet speed and with costs of travel down, investors search across national borders for higher yields and diversification of risks. Pricewaterhouse Coopers, a financial and management advisory firm, estimated that direct commercial real estate investment jumped to an all time record of $475 billion in 2005. That was, an increase of 21 percent over levels of 2004. Cross-border investment flows accounted for 35 percent of total transactions, increasing by 43 percent to $164 billion. Inter-regional investment flows comprised almost a quarter of total transactions, soaring by 40 percent to $114 billion.

With AIREEC giving Secretary Durano his one-stop venue, Barlin believed that Secretary Durano would get his target of more long-stay visitors faster. With the business matching and the networking gala dinners and forum in AIREEC, Barlin is confident there could be more investment interests than available Philippine projects.

Barlin was not worried about the jitters caused by the Trillanes commotion among investors last Thursday. "What matters to investors abroad was that the government demonstrated it was capable of resolving issues quickly and efficiently," she said.

IP Philippines hosts int'l confab

THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY Office of the Philippines (IP Philippines) recently opened the 4th Heads of Intellectual Property Offices Conference (Hipoc) 2007 with close to 100 local and foreign delegates in attendance. IP Philippines staged the two-day event for the first time in partnership with the European Patent Office (EPO).

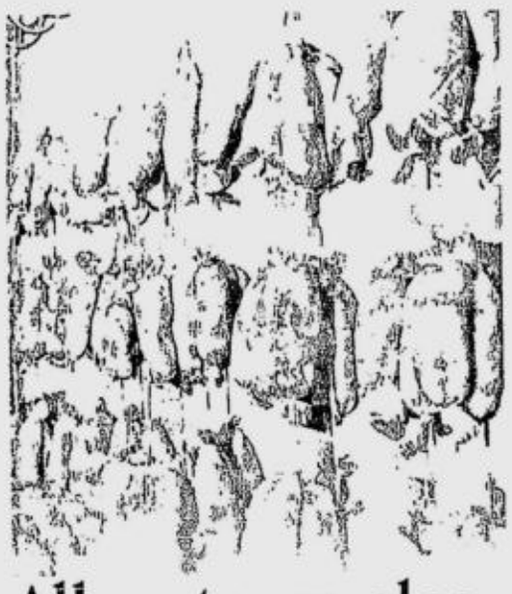
Lawyer Adrian S. Cristobal, Jr., director general of IP Philippines, said that it was an honor for the country to host Hipoc 2007. The international conference, themed "Addressing IP Needs of the Future," built on the previous year's meeting in Singapore on addressing growing workload and office modernization.

"Now, more than ever, the IP system's immense impact on society is felt in communities around the world," Cristobal said in his opening remarks. "Many issues like access to affordable medicines and knowledge or the level of protection of IP owners vis-à-vis the public interest are common concerns being debated in our countries and our regions," he said.

"The common objective is to restore that delicate balance in the IP system to ensure it promotes innovation, making it relevant to our people and spur socio-economic development," he added.

The first session, presided over by Cristobal, discussed the future of intellectual property rights (IPR) where Dr. Manuel Desantes, vice president of the EPO, presented the strategic renewal of patent offices and provided future scenarios. These scenarios could serve as tools for IP offices in designing strategies for intellectual property rights. Desantes was accompanied by other EPO officials, namely Niclas Morey, head of the Asia Unit and; Nicholas Kornig, Asia cooperation administrator.

Cristobal presented IP Philippines' two-year experience as a self-autonomous agency and the next steps for the office.



Albay town also boasts of own longganiza

From page B3-4

land Fiesta.

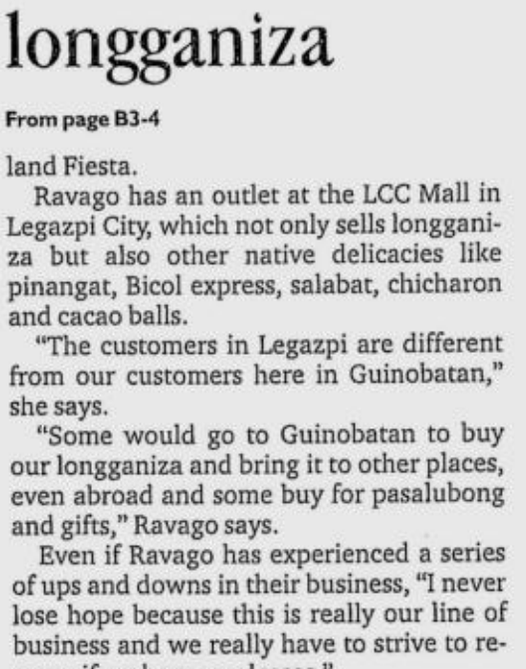
Ravago has an outlet at the LCC Mall in Legazpi City, which not only sells longganiza but also other native delicacies like pinangat, Bicol express, salabat, chicharon and cacao balls.

"The customers in Legazpi are different from our customers here in Guinobatan," she says.

"Some would go to Guinobatan to buy our longganiza and bring it to other places, even abroad and some buy for pasalubong and gifts," Ravago says.

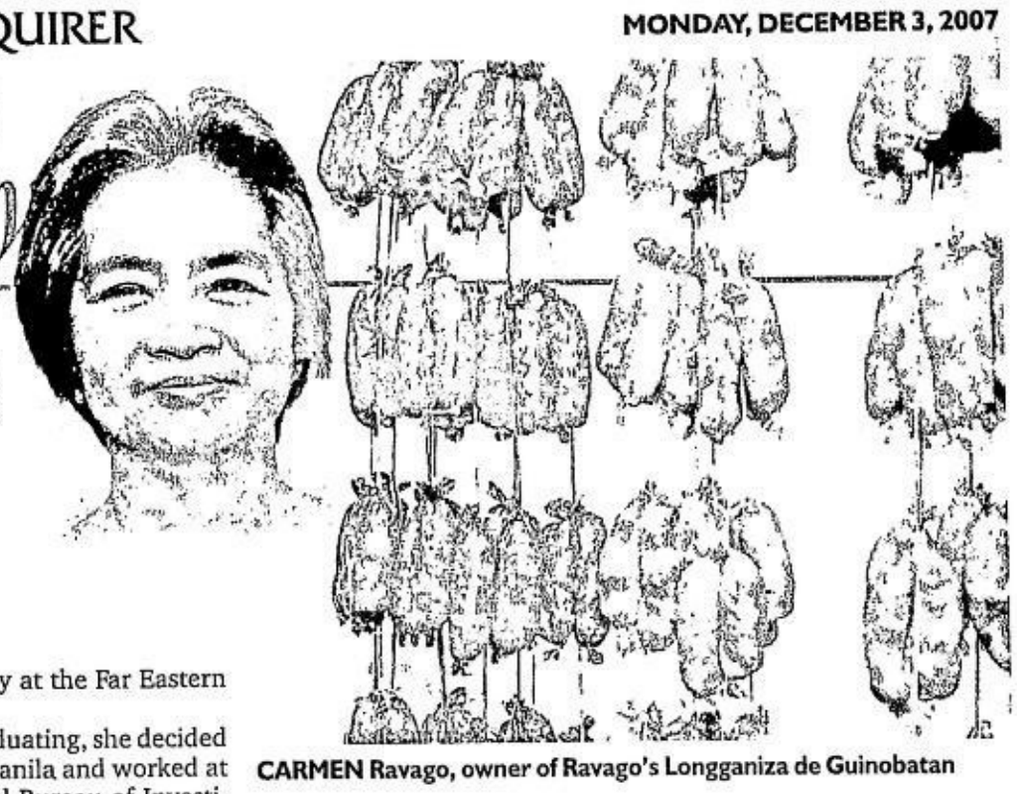
Even if Ravago has experienced a series of ups and downs in their business, "I never lose hope because this is really our line of business and we really have to strive to recover if we have any losses."

Ravago's Meat Products is located at A. Paulate Street (Iraya), Guinobatan, Albay, with contact no: 09198637882



RAVAGO also sells cacao balls.

Albay town also boasts of own *longganiza*



CARMEN Ravago, owner of Ravago's Longganiza de Guinobatan

By Joanna Los Baños
Inquirer Southern Luzon
Photos by Niño Jesus Orbeta

GUINOBATAN, ALBAY—IF there is the famous Vigan longganiza in Ilocos Sur and Lucban longganiza in Quezon, this town—located about 22 kilometers north of Legazpi City—is starting to get known for its finger-sized Longganiza de Guinobatan, which is becoming a sought-after *pasalubong* and delicacy by tourists and Bicolanos alike.

For one of its producers, going into the meat processing business was not easy.

Although she was born with parents who made longganiza for a living, Carmen Ravago, now 50, initially chose a path different from what she grew up in.

In 1970, she went to Manila and took up Bachelor of Science in Chemistry at the Far Eastern University.

After graduating, she decided to stay in Manila and worked at the National Bureau of Investigation.

In 1979, she got married and for a while, things went on smoothly.

Until she gave birth to her second child in 1981, who was diagnosed with cerebral palsy, a brain disorder that affects muscle coordination and body movement.

For two more years, she struggled as she took care of her family, especially her special child, while working at the government agency.

In 1985, she and her husband Abelardo, decided to go back to their hometown in Guinobatan, Albay, "to focus more on the needs of our special child."

"The main reason I left my job and went home from Manila was our child," she says of her daughter Lala, who had to undergo a series of therapies and medications.

After going back to their hometown, Ravago opened a meat stall in the town market.

From time to time, they would make longganiza and sell it to their customers.

Ravago admits that her special child, who died in 1998, was their family's good luck charm in their meat business.

"*Siya 'yung parang 'buwenas' sa negosyo*. Our business really went good when she was alive," she says.

Ravago learned how to make longganiza from her parents when she was about 5 years old.

"My parents were the first and only longganiza maker in the town," she says of her parents who started the business in the 1940s.

Ravago said her father, Eduardo Nosares, was the one who introduced longganiza in the town.

"My parents made only one kind of longganiza at that time," she says, adding that it was their family's source of income.

Full time

In 2005, Ravago's family decided to go full-blast in their longganiza business and shelled out P20,000 as capital.

It was not long before she gained back her capital since, according to Ravago, the fund was revolving and they produced on a regular basis.

The recipe of the longganiza that they sell now is an evolution based on the original recipe of her parents.

VACUUM PLASTIC-SEALED Ravago's Longganiza de Guinobatan is available in garlic, sweet and spicy hot.

"I have made some adjustments on the recipe after attending several seminars and workshops on product development," Ravago says.

The Department of Trade and Industry also invited them to join its One-Town-One-Product (Otop) program.

Ravago's longganiza is composed of pork, pepper, garlic, soy sauce, curing salt, sugar and other indigenous ingredients, which are cased in pigs' small intestines.

Vacuum plastic-sealed Ravago's Longganiza de Guinobatan is available in garlic, sweet and spicy hot flavors, which they sell at P80 per 300 grams or 20 pieces.

Of the three varieties, Ravago says garlic is the favorite.

In the market, they sell only two varieties: ordinary, which is composed mostly of fat; and special, which has only one-fourth fat.

Ravago says they also make custom-made longganiza at no additional cost, like, 50-50 (half meat and half fat), fat-free, sugar-free and some flavor adjustments—"whatever the customers want."

Ravago's Longganiza de Guinobatan also joins trade fairs like DTI's Orgullo ng Bicol, which is held yearly at the SM Megamall.

For the third year this year, it has also been the topnotcher of DTI and Pacific Mall's Pinoy Is-

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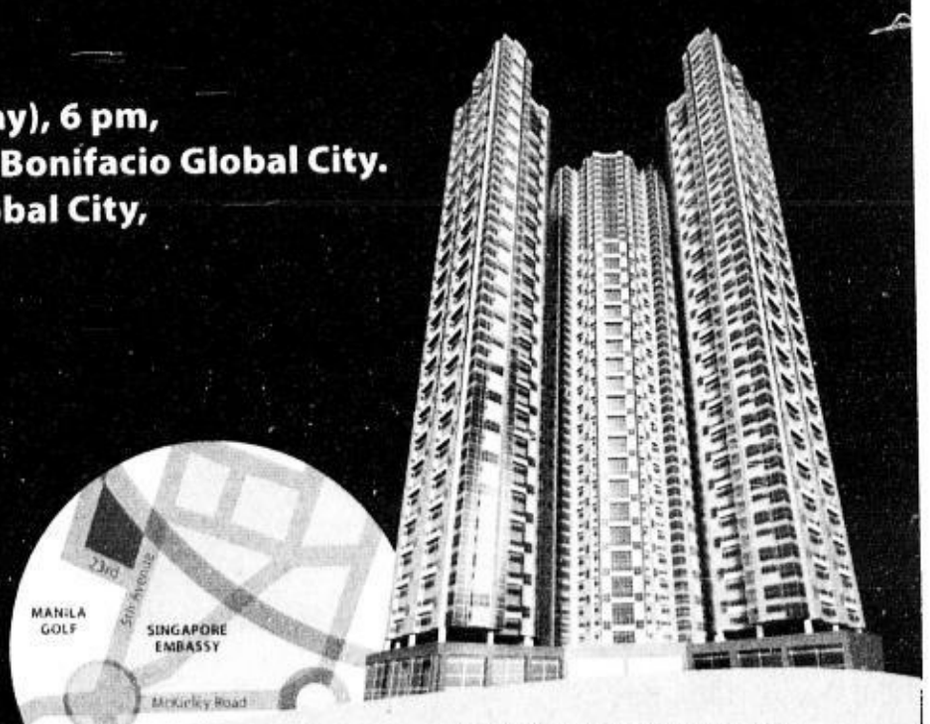

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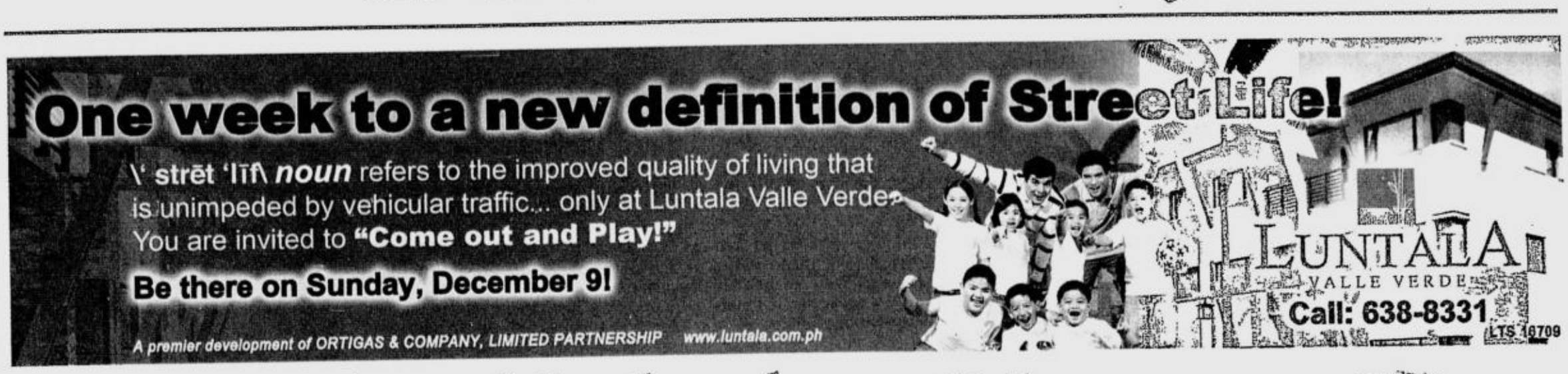


What this local bakeshop did to face competition

Text and photos by Chris V. Panganiban
Inquirer Mindanao

SAN FRANCISCO, AGUSAN del Sur—Twenty years ago, this family-owned bakery and restaurant, which had earned a niche in the local food industry, was contented with its two stores here.

But when two bakery companies from out of town started building branches here, Rose Go, owner of Rose Bakeshop, decided to take on the competition.

As branches of national bakery chain Julie's and Davao City-based Panaderia sprouted, Go also expanded her bakery's outlets.

With the help of her two grown-up children, Go, a longtime widow, established 19 branches, including those in neighboring towns and in the cities of Davao, Butuan, Cagayan de Oro and Valencia in Bukidnon.

In this town alone, where the main branch is located, there are currently four branches.

"We decided to branch out to get a share of the market from our rivals," says Manuelito Go, Rose's only son, who manages three branches of the family business.

He says it was the constant prodding of his sales agent-friends and close business associates that drove them to expand.

With only 13 bakers, waiters, waitresses and salesladies in 2000, Rose Bakeshop now employs more than 800 workers.

Go, who admits to adopting the competitions' strategy to grow the bakery's customer base, adds they are now eyeing new branches in Surigao City and possibly expand to the Visayas areas next year.

When they started to face the competition, Rose Bakeshop was still using the conventional concrete oven fueled by firewood.

Go says the management system was still the run-of-the-mill type.

Then Go says she was able to get expert advice under the Canadian Executive Services Organization-Business Advisory Program to upgrade their facilities. It was the Department of Trade and Industry which brought her to the program.

Under the program, Go says she learned about operational and financial management systems and helped her with new production technologies.

Her workers also underwent training for two weeks with Ceso-BAP Canadian experts, Pierre Brisebois, Dipankar Mukherjee and Surinder Khanna.

The experts trained Go's staff on production, finance, organization and management for two weeks.

Go says the result of the training included the introduction of new products while enhancing the quality of their delicacies with mechanized facilities.

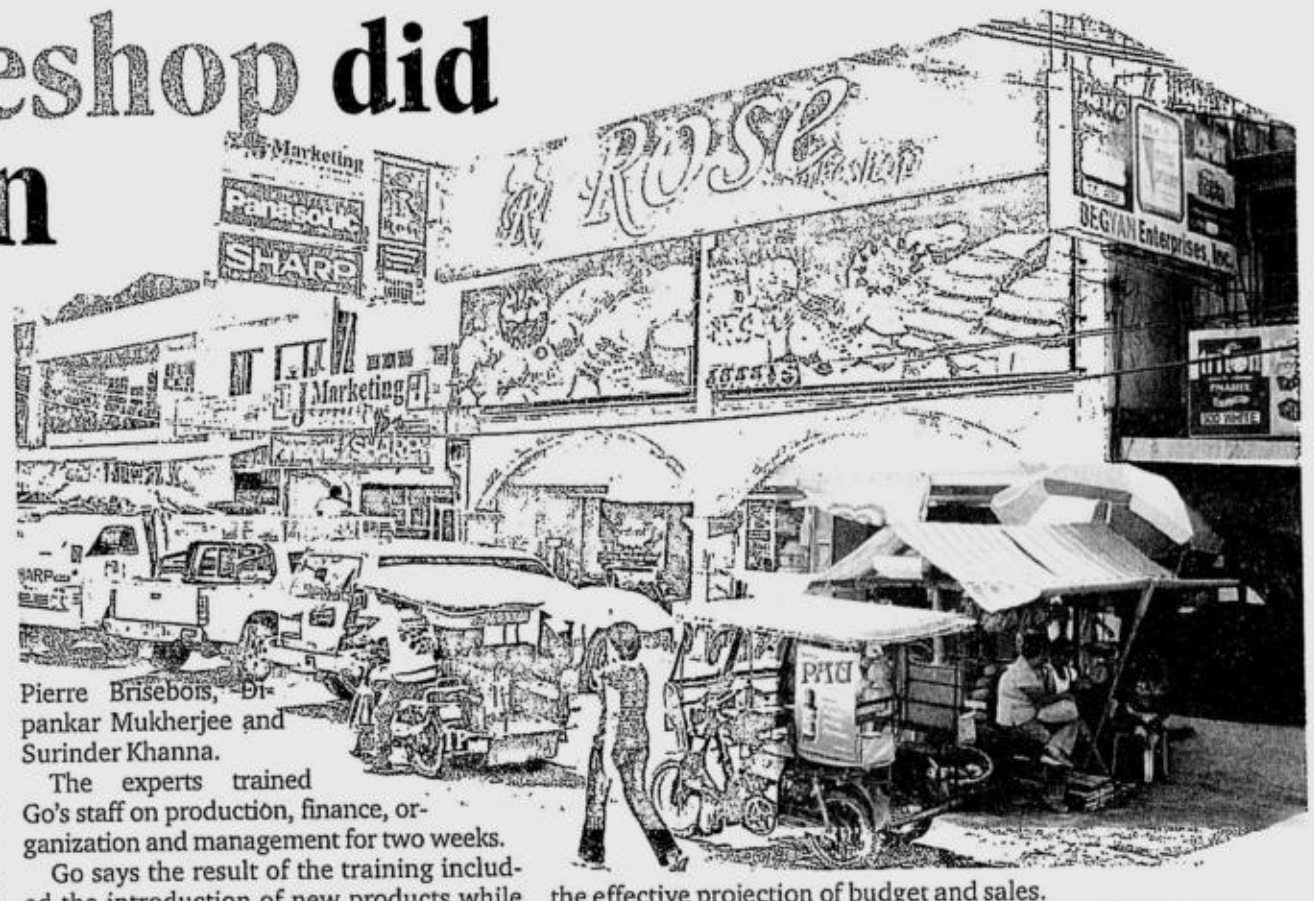
Manuelito admits that the computerization of their financial records, with the help of "Quick Books" software, also helped a lot.

He also notes that opening separate bank accounts for the branches made it easier to track the cash flow, which he says helps in the effective projection of budget and sales.

"We have opened our eyes and saw that there are lots of opportunities to explore to make our business grow," Go says.

Despite the success of the business, Go says she does not fail to tell her children to live a simple lifestyle.

She says she always tells them to avoid flashy cars and expensive homes.



FAÇADE of the main outlet of Rose Bakeshop right in the heart of San Francisco, Agusan del Sur, where the Go family started it all.

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UE's 9th mid-year commencement rites set

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE EAST will hold its 9th Mid-Year Commencement Rites for candidates for graduation of both Manila and Caloocan campuses on Dec. 5, 3 p.m. at the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC) Plenary Hall, CCP Complex, Pasay City.

UE president and chief academic officer Ester A. Garcia will lead the conferment of degrees to the candidates and the awarding of honors, while the respective deans of UE's Graduate School and various colleges will present the candidates for graduation.

US-based engineer Efren R. Abratique, president and CEO, Abratique & Associates and Safe Probe and a 2006 UE Diamond Jubilee Outstanding Alumni Achiever awardee, will be the commencement speaker. Abratique was a former Commissioner of the Los Angeles Board and Building Safety Commission and a former President of the Board of Building and Safety Commissioners both in Los Angeles, California.

Leading the UE 9th Mid-Year Commencement Rites candidates in the pledge of loyalty is Jaypee D. Reyes, a UE College of Arts and Sciences Manila Bachelor of Science in Psychology candidate and the lone recipient of a latin honor, magna cum laude.

UE Alumni Association Inc president Angelica T. Marquez will induct the new graduates to the alumni association immediately following the distribution of diplomas.

Anti-platelet drug may prevent recurrent stroke risk

MANY FAMILIES WORLDWIDE have experienced stroke with at least one of their family members. Many times, it occurs without warning. It is a cardiovascular disease that has claimed the lives of an estimated 5.7 million people worldwide, according to World Health Organization (WHO) statistics.

The antiplatelet drug cilostazol (Pletaal) has been shown to be another therapeutic option for prevention of recurrent strokes. In a well-designed double-blind investigation conducted over four years in Japan, it was shown that the long-term administration of cilostazol significantly prevented the recurrence of strokes with a relative risk-reduction of 41.7 percent.

The study was the first large-scale multicenter trial conducted in Japan to examine the effectiveness of cilostazol. The findings of the study were published in The Journal of Stroke and Cerebrovascular Diseases, the official publication of the National Stroke Association and the Japanese Stroke Society.

Plaque deposits on artery walls or clots that interrupt blood flow to the brain can cause ischemic strokes. Cilostazol has been shown in various studies to be an effective antiplatelet agent that can help prevent formation of blood clots. Hence, it is considered an attractive therapeutic option in the prevention of stroke and heart attack particularly in high-risk patients.

Cardiovascular diseases are responsible for 30 percent of the total mortality rates worldwide, mainly from heart diseases and stroke. Moreover, based on WHO statistics, mortality rates from CV diseases will increase up to 20 million deaths if there will be no improvement on preventive measures against CV diseases by 2015.

Stroke happens when the blood vessels that lead to the brain is blocked with fatty deposits. Once this happens, affected brain tissues will start to die.

"If symptoms happen, don't wait. Time is brain," said Dr. Anthony Furlan, associate director of the Cerebrovascular Center at Cleveland Clinic. "There are patients who have reversible stroke injury after three hours, but the number gets smaller as time goes on."

Patients should be protected from risk of secondary stroke and experience with Cilostazol (Pletaal) as an anti-platelet is supported by evidence-based trials for more than 10 years. It is the innovator that provides trusted and proven efficacy and long-term safety compared to other generic equivalents.

For information on Stroke Issues and Prevention, call the customer hotline at 811-4723 for GMA/Metro Manila or 1-800-1888-4723 for provincial calls.

Metrowalk is new host for dolphin show until January 6

THE PHENOMENAL DOLPHINS AND SEA LIONS STARring in The Wonderful World of Dolphins with the Sea Lions find a new home in the Metrowalk Commercial Complex to continue with their one-of-a-kind extravaganza. The dolphin show, the 11th such event in the country, is ongoing and is set to reach the finale on Jan. 6. There are three shows scheduled daily- 4 p.m., 6 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. Eva Nono, president of Movers and Shakers Inc, the show promoter, has said that they carry a permit from the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). Ticket prices are at P300 for regular seats and P500 for VIP seats. Tickets are available in all SM department stores through Ticketnet. For inquiries, call 384-5432; 384-5327; 0916-9845255.

Look for the red cup for the perfect coffee

SEATTLE'S BEST COFFEE HAS BECOME the go-to place for true coffee aficionados throughout the metro. Whether you prefer your coffee full-bodied and well rounded, delicately creamy and light, or bold and spicy, it has the right drink for you.

Seattle's Best Coffee has always been passionate about making that perfect cup, using nothing but the finest beans that are perfectly roasted to unlock their full flavor while avoiding that bitter taste.

Try out these core drinks. The White Chocolate Mocha is a silky coffee concoction that blends together bold coffee and delicate white chocolate in perfect harmony. Now if you're a flavor addict, the Almond Mocha Joy is your drink. For those who crave for the richness of mocha and sweet raspberries, there's the Raspberry Mocha Kiss. But if bold flavors are what you're looking for, the Irish Coffee Breve will definitely deliver. And for those who love cold concoctions, the refreshing Javanilla is guaranteed to hit the spot.

Seattle's Best also serves freshly cooked gourmet meals prepared right in the store's very own kitchen to satisfy your hunger pangs any time of the day. There's so much to choose from-from an all-day breakfast menu to hearty pasta dishes, yummy sandwiches, and healthy salads. These freshly cooked gourmet meals at these branches: Tomas Morato; Caltex SLEX Southbound; Rockwell; Harrison Plaza Village Square; SM Megamall; Ongpin, Binondo, Festival Mall; Bonifacio High Street and at Trinoma Mall.

It makes the joy of taking that first sip even more pleasurable with its very comfortable new interiors in their brand new stores at Bonifacio High Street in The Fort, Taguig and Trinoma in Quezon City. The comfortable seats, the cozy interiors, and the interesting pictures of various places in Seattle really set the mood. Couple it with in-house music with an edgy jazz vibe and you've got the makings of an awesome place to unwind alone or with friends.

What's better is that Seattle's Best Coffee will soon be open in Valero Street, Salcedo Village, Makati and at Ayala Center Cebu. Also, there's the newly renovated Seattle's Best store in Greenbelt 3. That's definitely good news to the coffee junkie in you.

Get your coffee fix, whatever it may be, at a branch near you: Makati (Rockwell, Manila Polo Club Sports Lounge and Greenbelt 3), Quezon City (Eastwood City Walk 1, Katipunan, Cybermall, SM The Block North Edsa, Tomas Morato, Trinoma Mall); Manila (Harrison Plaza Village Square, Metropolitan Hospital, SM City-Manila, Ongpin Binondo), Pasig City (SM Megamall Megastrip, Tektite Tower), South Area (Festival Mall, Caltex SLEX Southbound, Alabang Town Center); Pasay City (SM Mall of Asia) and Taguig (Bonifacio High Street).

Mr. Softy takes 7 at 2007

THE NUMBER 7 IS OFTEN ASSOCIATED with good luck, fortune and success. There is always something about the number 7 that we tend to look forward to. And in the case of Mr. Softy Philippines, 7 is their number to mark as the company celebrates its 7th anniversary as the country's pioneer in fresh ice cream. Cookies and cream lovers will definitely fall for Rumble Crunch, a fresh ice cream deliciously covered with the crunchy and yummy combination of cookies and cream coating, choco flavor wafer sticks and enjoyable cookies.

Or try Mr. Softy's choco supreme with Chocoloco Glaze-a rich and delectable chocolate fudge-flavored topping that chocoholics will surely love. How about something sweet with a tinge of kiwi that's just perfect variation of strawberry flavored soft serve ice cream? Then Strawberry Kiwi Glaze is your match. Bursting with sweet and luscious red-ripe strawberry with Australian Kiwi, this topping will surely make the perfect glaze of the new Mr. Softy Strawberry Kiwi Glaze. And, of course, the all-time favorite Mr. Softy Cup With Toppings-a fresh ice cream served with your favorite chocolate or strawberry syrup plus toppings of your choice-from mallows to chocolate coated candies to rainbow colored sprinkles. Enjoy all these with a touch of Mr. Softy's "right-on-demand" serving, its seal of guaranteed freshness. Keep on buying Mr. Softy to increase your chances of winning a Honda City and other prizes.

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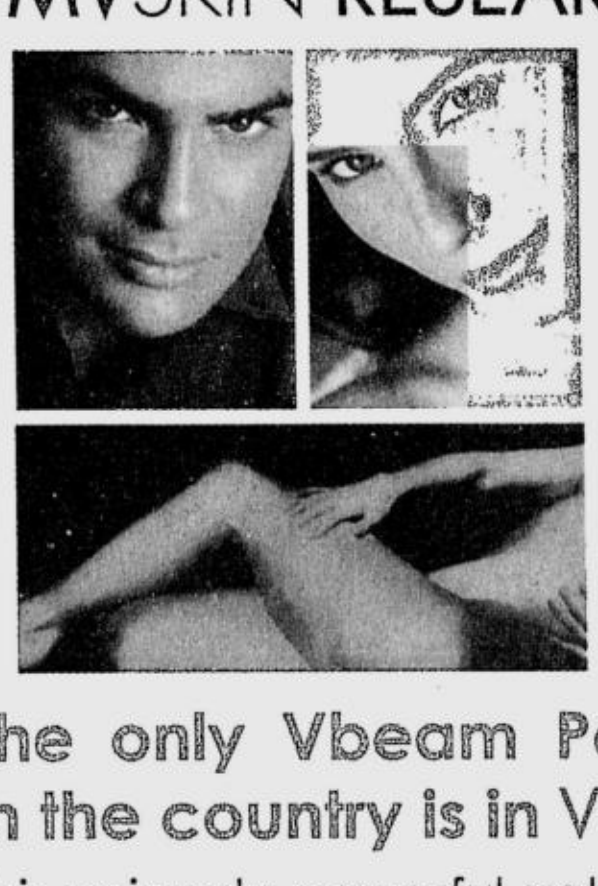

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Sunblock daily, even during the rains

WHEN PEOPLE HEAR THE word sunblock, the first things that come to mind are summer, beaches, and sunbathing. Most of us do not realize that, even during the rainy days, sunscreens can provide skin protection from everyday hazards like UV (ultraviolet) rays emitted by fluorescent lamps, computers and televisions, to name a few.

In a tropical country like the Philippines, where UV rays from the sun are also much more intense during any time of the year, the regular use of sunscreens is not being given much attention, although the known risks from high exposure to UV rays are well known, according to health researchers.

One of the most common and dreaded effects of harmful UV rays is skin cancer, although there are other equally serious repercussions such as premature aging of the skin and the suppression of the proper functioning of the body's immune system. Harmful UV rays likewise adversely affect the skin's natural defenses.

To address these concerns, Pervil Cosmetics Philippines has developed and recently introduced in the market its Pervil Magic Moisturizing Sunblock Cream, a caring daytime cream that offers protection from harmful and damaging UV rays. Pervil Magic Sunblock Cream is rated SPF 15, which is required by experts to provide effective UV protection.

"We simply don't realize it, but daily chores such as working on the computer and even shopping expose us to artificial UV rays, most especially from fluorescent lamps and computer screens. That is why we need daily sunscreen protection, whether it is sunny or not," according to Pervil Cosmetics Philippines marketing manager Patty Madrid.

Madrid said US researchers have concluded that a two-hour shopping in a fluorescent-lighted mall without UV filters is equivalent to an hour's exposure in the sun in terms of UV rays, minus the sunburn.

"The good thing is Pervil Magic Moisturizing Sunblock Cream offers not only UV protection but also hydrates the skin and delivers sheer coverage for a balanced and even complexion. It is lightweight and does not contain mineral oils," she added.

Madrid said that as a beauty product, Pervil Magic Sunblock Cream is ideal as a makeup base foundation that can be applied to the entire face after cleansing and toning. It is also ideal to use after towel drying, swimming or excessive perspiration.

Aside from its Sunblock Cream, Pervil Cosmetics Philippines also produces Pervil Magic Cream, Whitening Lotion and Cream Soap. When used in combination, these beauty products will produce the best results to whiten and moisturize the skin, face and body.

Pervil Magic products are available at all Mercury Drug, Watsons, South Star Drug, Rose Pharmacy, SM Hypermart, SM Supermarket, HBC, Landmark Department Store, Makro and Ever Supermarkets nationwide. For inquiries, log on to www.pervil.com or call the Manila sales and marketing office at 376-5043 to 44.

MOVEMENTS

Jollibee appoints new VP for corporate marketing

JOLLIBEE Foods Corp.(JFC) recently appointed a new vice president for the corporate marketing division of its Jollibee quick-service restaurants (QSR).

Fresh from serving as marketing director of pizza-and-pasta chain Greenwich, another JFC company, Joanna Marigold Flores Tantoco brings with her more than 17 years of expertise in brand and product management, retail, advocacy, and consumer relationship marketing (CRM).

She also has a background in sales, finance, production and logistics.

Prior to her new appointment, Tantoco's strategic leadership raised sales margins, consumer awareness and loyalty levels for her previous employers.

At SCJohnson & Son Inc., she initially served as marketing director and Asia Pacific marketing training leader, moving up to cluster marketing director for the Philippines, Malaysia, and Singapore in 2006. During her term, the local office received numerous SCJohnson citations, becoming the most awarded in the world.

For the seamless integration of the Bayer consumer care marketing group into SCJohnson and for consistent market leadership, the Philippine office became the recipient of the 2004 chairman and president's global award for best integrated subsidiary and the 2005 chairman and president's global award for market share growth, respectively.

"Iwas Dengue," a public service campaign that Tantoco integrated into the business, became one of the most widely recognized advocacies in the country, receiving the global big idea award for both SCJ and ad agency FCB in 2005.

As Greenwich marketing director, she strengthened the company's market leadership of the pizza category and led advertising efforts that clearly set the brand apart from its competitors.

She also held brand and marketing positions at Pepsi Co, Del Monte Phils. Inc., Procter & Gamble Phils. Inc. and Philamlife. Overall, Tantoco has handled 30 brands across 13 categories, including household, personal care, insecticides, food and beverage, healthcare, and QSR.

Filipino exec gets top post in Asean cement group

ERNESTO M. Ordoñez, president of the Cement Manufacturers of the Philippines (Cemap), was elected president of the Asean Federation of Cement Manufacturers (AFCM), a seven-country member organization of leading cement companies in the region.

As a two-year term president, Ordoñez identified two priorities in his watch, namely: consultations and information sharing using modern technology, and a strong focus on sustainable development.

A former Cabinet secretary for presidential flagship projects in the Ramos Cabinet, and a Department of Trade and Industry undersecretary under four presidents, Ordoñez succeeds Abdul Razak Ramli from Malaysia.

In his inaugural message, Ordoñez said he would build on Ramli's excellent work in order to have a "continually vibrant, effective and responsive AFCM."

Renaissance Makati City Hotel appoints new director

RENAISSANCE Makati City Hotel, Manila has appointed Sujeet Kumar as new director of operations of the 598-room deluxe hotel. Prior to moving to the Philippines, he held the same position at the Goa Marriott Resort, India since 2004.

Kumar joined the hospitality industry back in 1991, having started in front office operations before gaining extensive knowledge in the food and beverage division with various establishments in India such as ITC Park Sheraton & Towers, Chennai; ITC Windsor Sheraton & Towers, Bangalore; Cidade de Goa; and the Renaissance Goa Resort.

With 16 years of experience behind him, Kumar will be in charge of all hotel operations including front office, housekeeping, security and the food and beverage divisions.

LCF has new board members

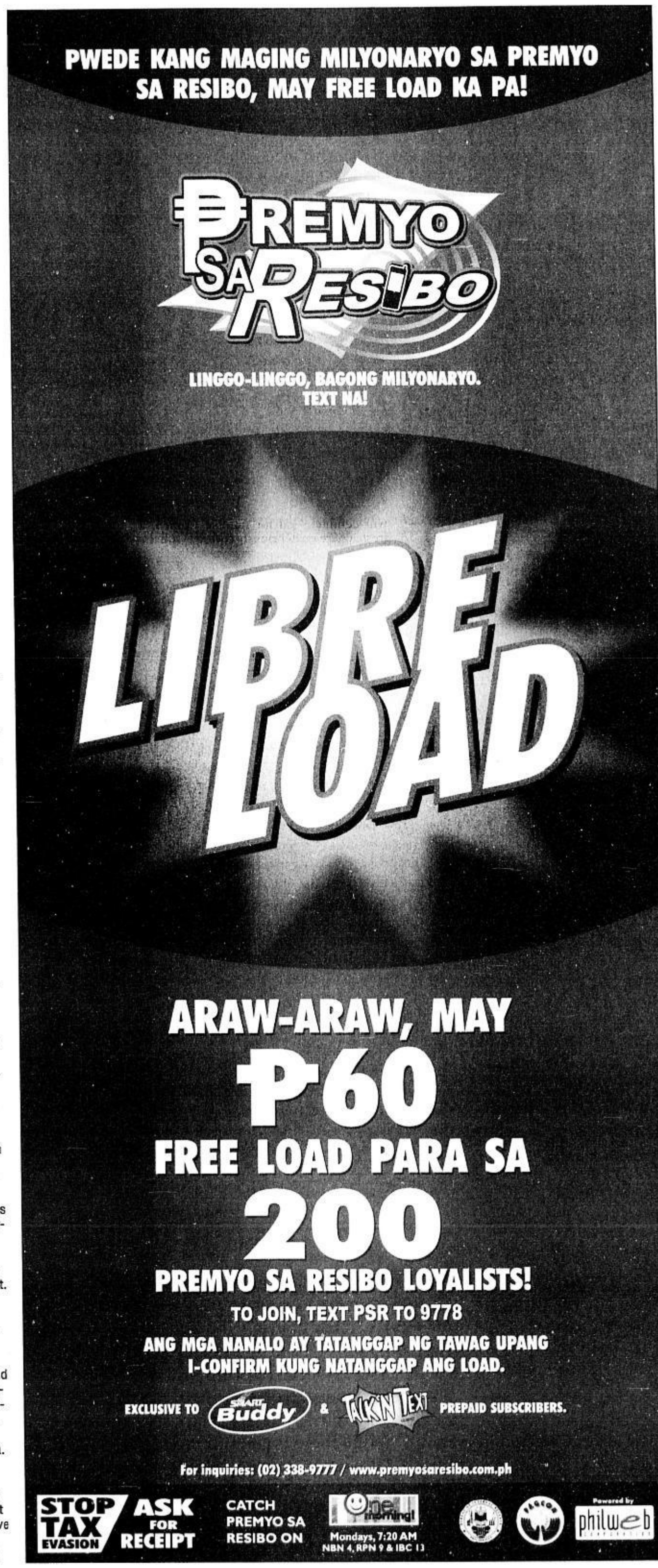
MARILOU Erni, executive director of Petron Foundation and Chit Juan, director and founder of the Figaro Foundation, head this year's board as chair and president, respectively.

The League of Corporate Foundations (LCF) is now making strides to involve more companies who have corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities and invite them as members of the 73-strong organization.

Erni and Juan have been meeting with corporate CEOs to further engage them in their corporation's CSR strategies, as CEOs make the best leaders of CSR when it comes to a firm's alignment of its CSR with business-related goals.

As opposed to what used to be believed as "right hand should not know what the left is doing," global companies now believe that CSR must be integrated into business strategy and this is what makes great companies, turn into good companies.

The LCF also recently launched the CSRi, or the CSR Institute headed by Lydia Sarmiento, to teach and share with companies the lessons and best practices in CSR from its own membership pool and from other inspiring projects.



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PALL MALL EXCISE TAX CLASSIFICATION

The Pall Mall excise tax classification continues to be a matter of public interest. While this is a purely administrative issue that the Department of Finance (DOF) has to resolve, the House of Representatives Ways and Means Committee is conducting an inquiry, in aid of legislation, to look into the allegations raised in the media relating to the mid-price classification of Pall Mall. British American Tobacco Philippines (BAT) and its local business partner La Suerte Cigar & Cigarette Factory, welcome the opportunity accorded by the Committee to present its side of the issue.

In the course of the Congress hearings, it has become apparent that a number of the negative allegations were made due to lack of information or misappreciation of the facts and laws relevant to the classification process of new cigarette brands. BAT believes that more clarification on our part is needed for the facts and legality underpinning the issue to stand out, paving the way for a more factual understanding of the entire case.

MINIMUM VOLUME REQUIREMENTS ARE NOT APPLICABLE

The issue was raised of BAT and La Suerte not meeting the minimum volume requirements of commercial production and marketing as defined in Section 2(l) of Revenue Regulations 3-2006.

The fact is that Section 6 of the same Revenue Regulations 3-2006 categorically states that brands introduced between January 1, 2004 and December 31, 2004 "shall not be subject to the minimum volume requirements for commercial production and marketing" defined in Section 2(l) of Revenue Regulations 3-2006.

Pall Mall was launched in the Philippine domestic market in August 2004. Clearly, it falls within the period where new brands launched are exempt from the application of the minimum volume requirements.

MINIMUM VOLUME REQUIREMENTS ARE NOT FAIR

Subjecting established brands to minimum volume requirements for commercial production and marketing is reasonable. But applying the same conditions to new brands is unfair and offends the constitutional prohibition against unfair competition (Art. XII, Section 19, 1987 Constitution).

New brands require time to build brand awareness and gain consumer acceptance. By subjecting new brands to minimum volume requirements, it effectively stifles competition and acts as a barrier to entry to these new brands while at the same time protecting established brands to the detriment of consumers.

We should all take note of the *Tatad* case whereby the Supreme Court struck down the minimum inventory required of new entrants in the downstream oil industry for being unconstitutional as it acts as a high barrier to entry for prospective players. The parallel here in relation to the Pall Mall case is extremely striking.

PALL MALL HAS BEEN GAINING CONSUMER ACCEPTANCE

Contrary to certain assertions made, Pall Mall's production volume is more than sufficient to sustain a nationwide distribution, i.e., marketed in all the revenue regions in Metro Manila and in at least 51 percent of all other revenue regions. As a matter of fact, out of the 19 revenue regions in the Philippines, Pall Mall is marketed in 15 revenue regions.

From Pall Mall's initial product launch in August 2004 up to the beginning of 2007, La Suerte produced a total of 1,641 master cases of Pall Mall which, at 500 packs per master case, totals 820,500 packs or 16,410,000 sticks of cigarettes. This shows that Pall Mall has been doing well and steadily gaining consumer acceptance. Had the BIR classified Pall Mall at mid-price, the projected distribution of Pall Mall in 2007 would be in excess of 1,500 cases (total of 15 million sticks of cigarettes).

NO PARALLEL BETWEEN THE PALL MALL AND LUCKY STRIKE CASES

Assertions have been made that BAT's positions in both the Lucky Strike and Pall Mall cases were inconsistent. In particular, asserting that BAT, in the Lucky Strike case, was questioning the constitutionality of Republic Acts 8240 (amended by Republic Act 9334) while in the Pall Mall case, it was seeking refuge under the same law.

To be clear, the issues in both cases are different. Moreover, being separate cases, one does not have a bearing on the other. In the Lucky Strike case, BAT is only questioning Annex D of RA 8240 (as amended by RA 9334) insofar as it discriminates against new brands. What is unconstitutional is not the law per se but the provision thereof that allows existing brands to continue to pay excise tax on the basis of their 1996 retail prices while new brands are made to pay excise tax on the basis of their current retail prices.

Along the same line, assertions have also been made that on the one hand, BAT was questioning the outcome of the price survey that resulted in the reclassification of Lucky Strike; and on the other, BAT was asserting that Pall Mall should be classified on the basis of the December 22, 2006 price survey.

To be clear again, in the Lucky Strike case, BAT is not questioning the validity per se of the revenue issuances mandating the conduct of the price survey. BAT is questioning the revenue issuances insofar as they mandated the survey and reclassification of new brands to the exclusion of existing brands. In the name of fairness, BAT has no issue with the price survey conducted in the Lucky Strike case provided a similar survey be conducted on existing brands as well.

WHAT "ANNEX D" MEANS TO THE FILIPINO PEOPLE

"Annex D" with its time-locked provision unfairly protects existing brands at the expense of new brands, making the playing field uneven and unfair for new players and brands. But what implications does it have on the people of the Philippines?

The fact is that brands in "Annex D" are paying excise based on the excise classification which they obtained on the basis of their retail prices in 1996. However, all these brands are selling at much higher prices now than they were in 1996 when they had their excise classification fixed. If subject to a new price survey, most if not all of them, will be reclassified to higher excise brackets and hence paying higher excise rates. The provision deprives the government of more excise revenue from the existing brands, revenue which could be used to alleviate poverty for instance.

Why should Filipinos be deprived of this additional revenue?

THE DOF HAS THE AUTHORITY TO REVIEW FORMER COMMISSIONER JOSE MARIO C. BUÑAG'S RULING

Some have questioned the DOF's authority to review Commissioner Bunag's ruling. However, it is clear that as a higher government body to the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR), the DOF has the power of supervision and control over the BIR. Furthermore, the DOF has the power of review over interpretations of the tax laws and regulations under Section 4 of the National Internal Revenue Code (NIRC). Commissioner Buñag's erroneous ruling involves an interpretation of the laws and regulations. And if upheld, would apply to all taxpayers in similar situations with all its negative implications.

The DOF decision took into consideration the price survey, and correctly and properly interpreted the laws and regulations. The decision reverses Commissioner Buñag's erroneous ruling, affirming the excise classification of Pall Mall as a mid-price brand. In doing so, the DOF not only acted lawfully, properly and correctly, but also acted completely within its jurisdiction.

THE DOF SECRETARY IS AUTHORISED TO DELEGATE TO UNDERSECRETARY GAUDENCIO MENDOZA THE AUTHORITY TO REVIEW COMMISSIONER BUÑAG'S RULING

This should not have been an issue but some have raised the question of whether Undersecretary Mendoza had the authority to sign the DOF decision reversing Commissioner Buñag's ruling or whether the Secretary of Finance had the authority to delegate the authority to review the ruling to Undersecretary Mendoza.

Nowhere in Section 4 of the NIRC does it state that the Secretary of Finance alone may exercise the power to review. Neither does it prohibit the Secretary from validly delegating such review authority to a subordinate officer. Besides, there was a precedent case of such delegation of power to review by a Department Secretary to his Undersecretary which was settled jurisprudence.

Moreover, Administrative Code of 1987 expressly permits a Department Secretary, such as the Secretary of Finance, to delegate authority to officers and employees under the Secretary's direction. As such, Undersecretary Mendoza's authority to sign the DOF decision reversing Commissioner Buñag's ruling should be a non-issue. The fact that the Secretary of Finance himself has not reversed or repudiated that decision adds weight and validity to it.

AN APPEAL FOR A FAIR AND OBJECTIVE RESOLUTION

The facts surrounding Pall Mall's excise classification are laid bare for all to see. We appeal to all to judge the case objectively, fairly and on the basis of the facts and its legal merits. It is very clear that Pal Mall's P6.74 mid-price excise classification is legally sound and affirmed by DOF's lawful and proper decision classifying it as such.

We remain hopeful for a quick and fair resolution to the matter so that there is certainty for us to expand our business in the Philippines, create jobs and pay our fair share of tax.

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MONDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2007

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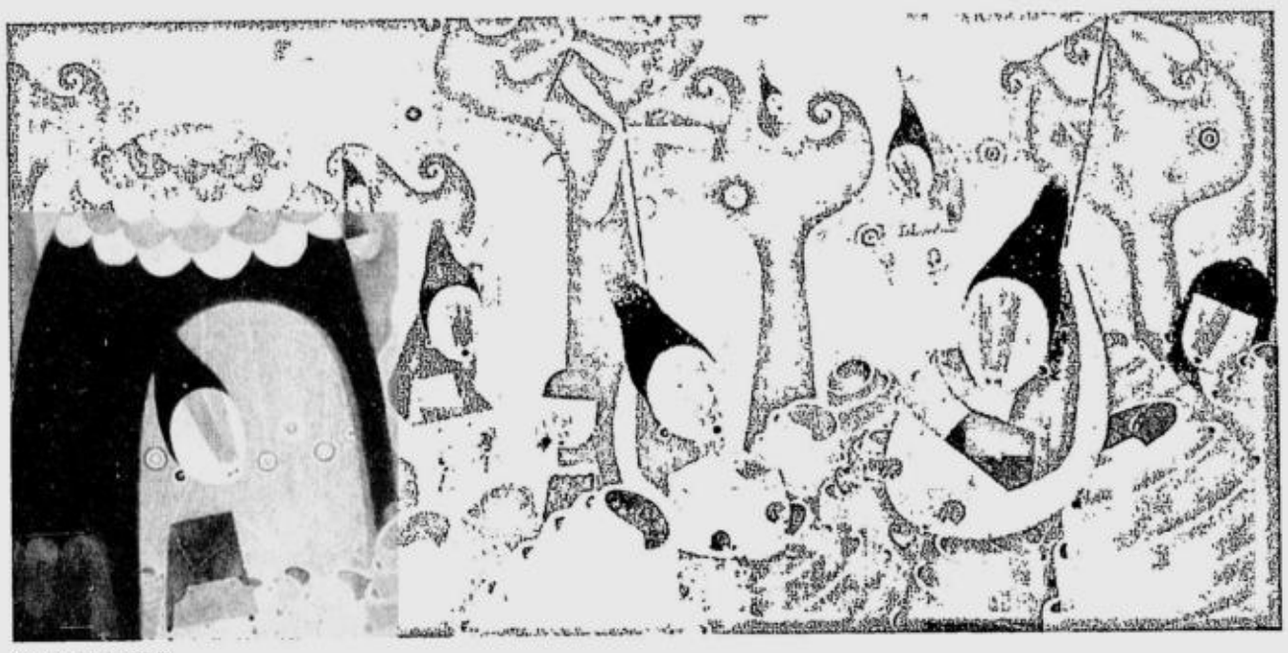

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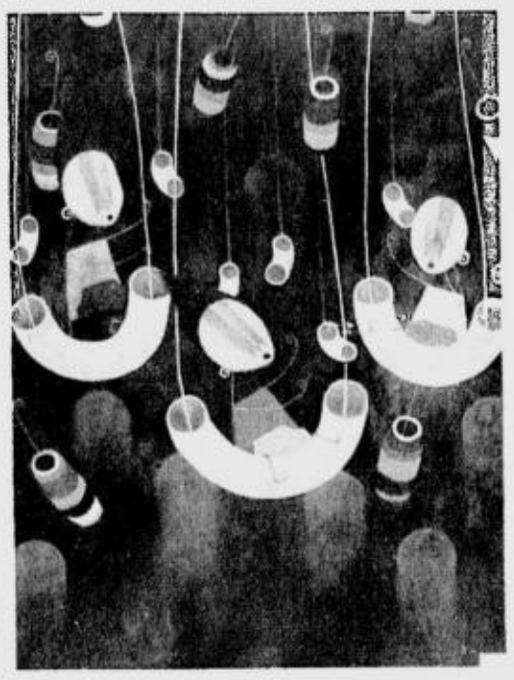

"SWING Kids"

Farley del Rosario in Singapore

YOUNG ARTIST Farley del Rosario mounted a successful exhibit of his very popular works in Singapore's Utterly Art gallery.

In "Wonderland," Del Rosario reveals a beguiling fantasy world populated by the artist's iconic balloon-headed urchins, with curlicued limbs and expressions of wide-eyed amazement.

The exhibition showcases the artist's well-known childhood-inspired works populating a universe of relativistic improbability where Lilliputian characters thrive amid oversized guitars, safety pins and clothes' pins.

Bright colors and richly pat-

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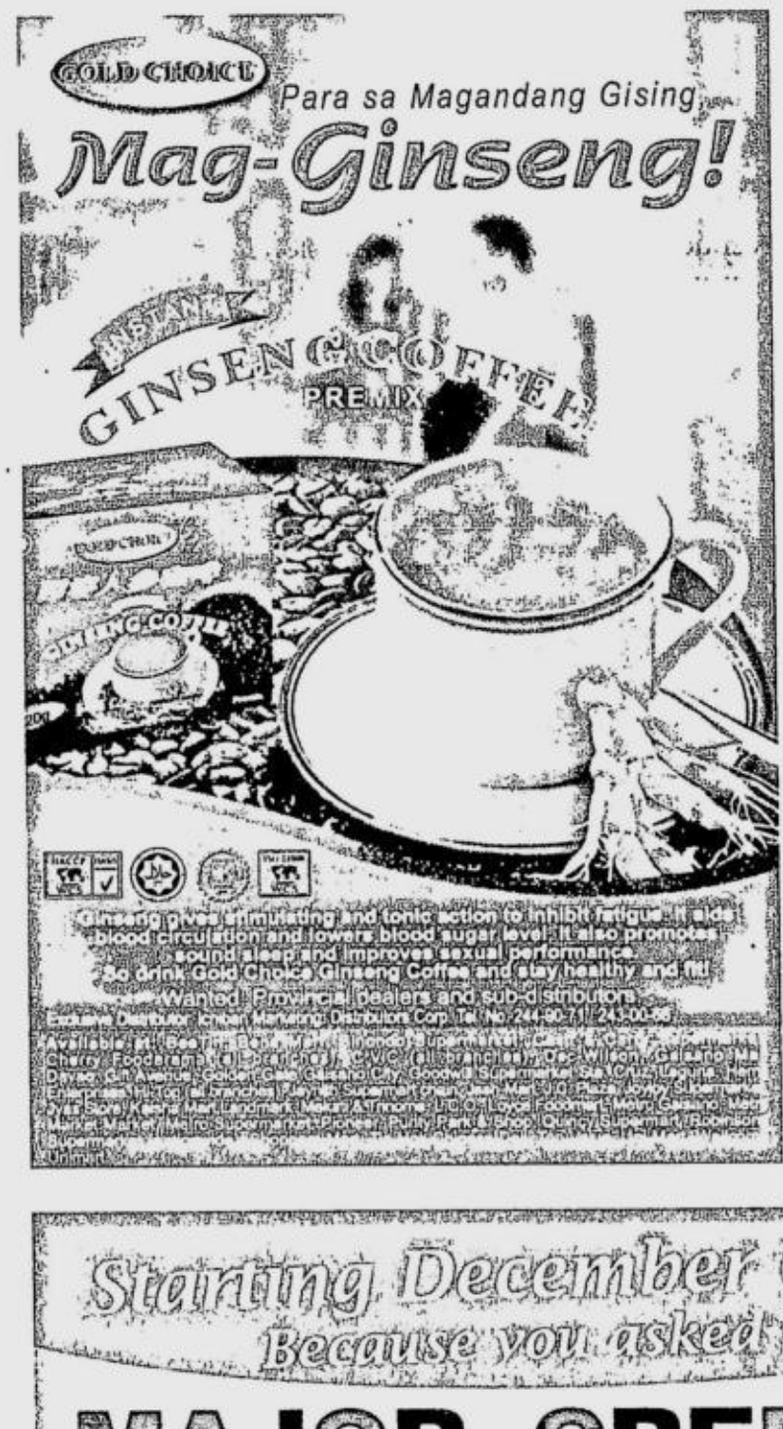

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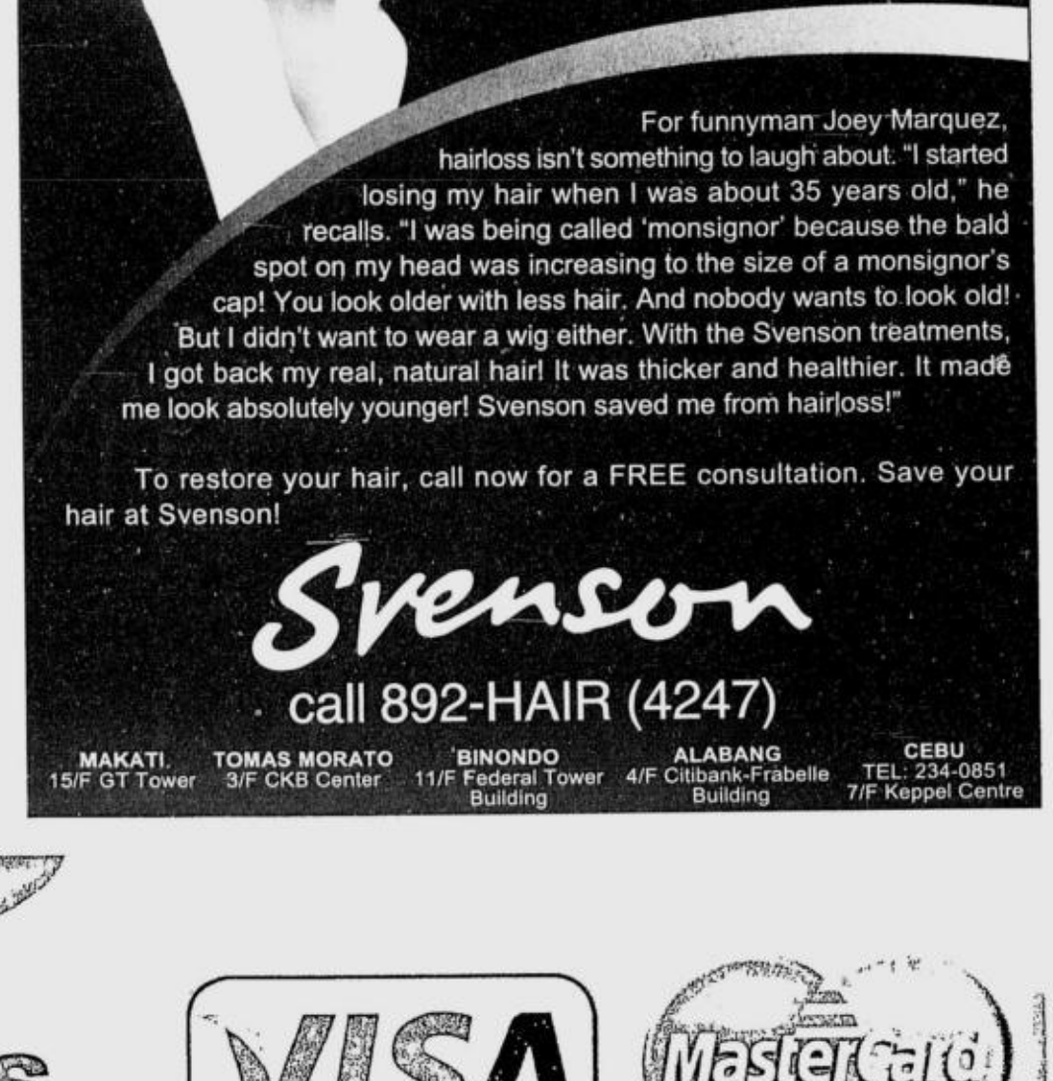

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"PAGDADALAGA ni Perseponya"

Varona's highly personal sculptures

THE ARTIST with "Sa Iyo Ibibigay ang Lahat"

By James P. Ong
Contributor

"TALK ABOUT SIGNS," says sculptor Anna Varona when asked for an anecdote to promote her first one-woman sculptural show in Boston Gallery, which opens this weekend.

"After 'Ave Eva,' the first show that featured some of my sculptural works, people were encouraging me to focus on sculpture. Of course, I was torn," she recounts.

When her friend, sculptor Pablo Capati III, asked her what was making her hesitate, she enumerated the things she would need to seriously pursue it.

"One of them was having my own kiln, which is rather expensive," says the 41-year-old artist, a Fine Arts graduate from College of the Holy Spirit who has attended a sculpture class with Joel Alonday at Art Informal gallery in Greenhills.

Varona was having this conversation with Capati over lunch at his favorite hole-in-the-wall Japanese restaurant when the owner overheard them.

"The owner said: 'I have three kilns at the back from a pottery master who has left the country several years ago and I have never used it. I would rather that it goes to someone who will. Do you want it?' He was insistent that I accept it as a gift," she recalls.

The kilns have yet to be used by Varona (she is still having them repaired), but they have already indirectly inspired her to produce the nine works on exhibit in "Mula sa Putik."

"Clay will tell you how it is and show you its limits. It is a truthful medium, unadulterated," she says. "This gives me the confidence and freedom to be sincere with myself and the work I produce."

Her sculptures are stark opposites of how she would paint her still-life images a few years ago: innocent, pretty and sweet; perhaps influenced by the art classes she attended in the United States, including a month at the Art Student's League in New York under the tutelage of Ron Sherr and Gregg Kreutz.

Difficulties

This time, her works were inspired by the many uncertainties and difficulties this mother of six has gone through in the past, and painful experience she would rather not talk about.

"Mula sa Putik" shouts pain, anguish and raw energy. And with titles like "Si Felicia... Ang Martir" and "Sa Iyo Ibibigay ang Lahat," it is safe to say it is about seeking identity and relationships.

"Salaming Bulag" shows a couple mirroring each other, one of them blindfolded and feeling the other person's face. It encourages the viewer to become introspective and discover himself.

But if there's one work that really captures the feeling of "Mula sa Putik," it is "Pagdadalaga ni Perseponya," an ode to the daughter of Zeus and Demeter who got kidnapped by Hades, god of the underworld. The sculptor portrays Persephone after her captivity as liberated and glorious.

Just like Persephone and her other works in clay, Varona has been strengthened, tempered and glazed by life's wondrous kiln.

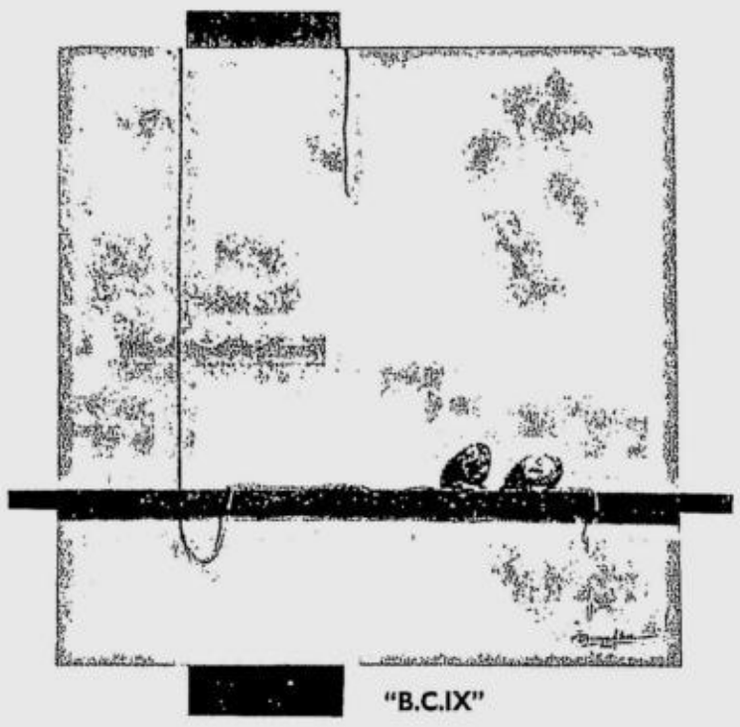
One day, when Varona had lined up her works in her studio, getting them ready for delivery, her little son walked into the studio and took a look at the faces on the pieces.

"He asks me out of nowhere, 'Mommy is that you?' I came upon a realization, and so I answered, 'They're all me... one way or another.'"

"Mula sa Putik," presented by Boston Gallery, Silangan Foundation and Britannia Art Projects, opens on Dec. 8 at Boston Gallery.

"SA AKING Isip"

Anna de Leon's 'Beyond Comprehension'



"B.C.IX"

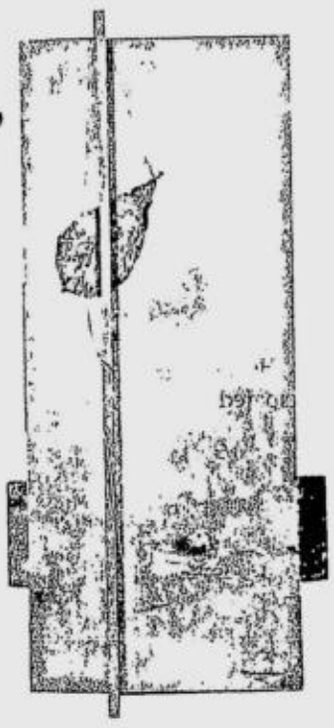
"B.C.I"

ANNA DE LEON IS holding her second solo exhibition, "Beyond Comprehension," in 1/of Gallery at Serendra, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig, Dec. 1-12.

The show opens today at 6 p.m.

The exhibition notes by Migs Villanueva say De Leon's presentation is "dramatic in its bareness and simplicity... at once strange and enigmatic."

Call 9013152.



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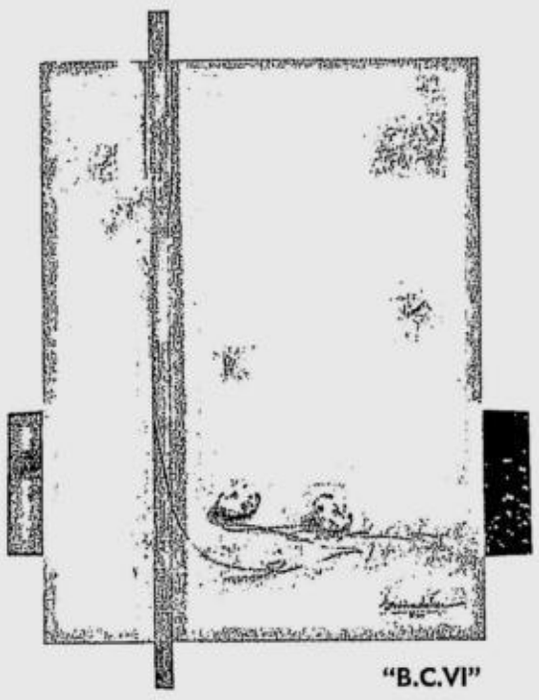
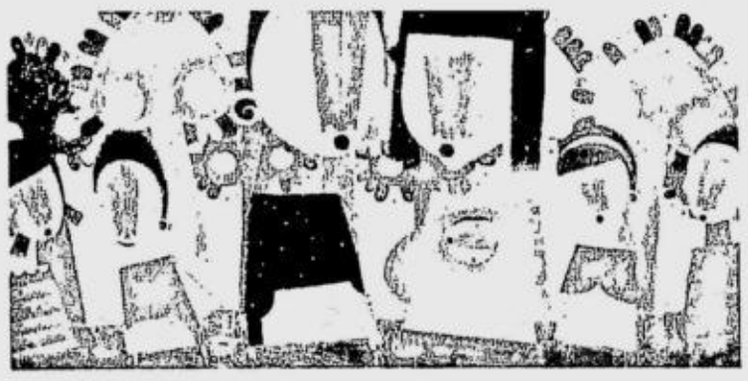


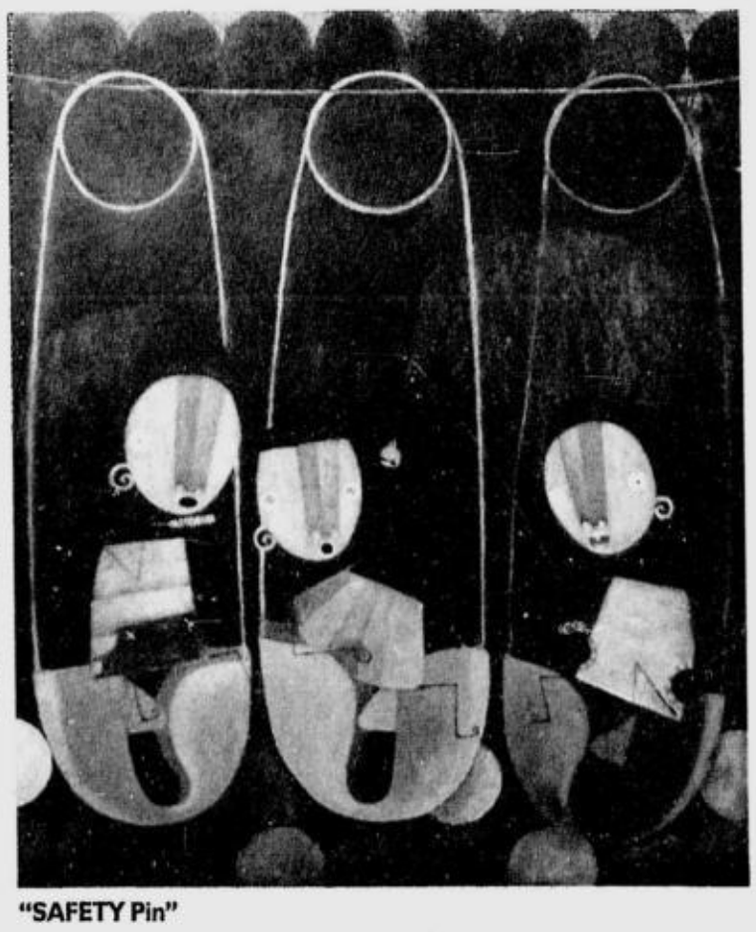
"B.C.VI"

Farley del Rosario . . .

From page C1



"HAPPY Together"



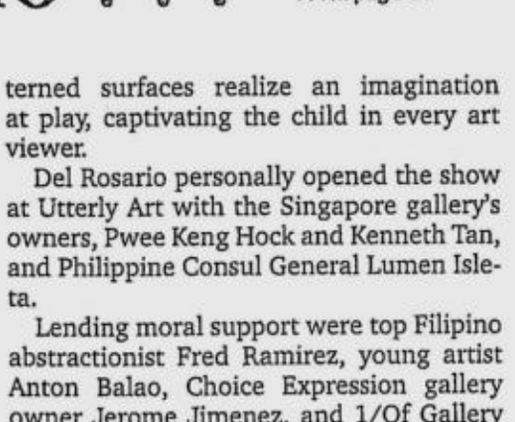
"SAFETY Pin"

terned surfaces realize an imagination at play, captivating the child in every art viewer.

Del Rosario personally opened the show at Utterly Art with the Singapore gallery's owners, Pwee Keng Hock and Kenneth Tan, and Philippine Consul General Lumen Isleta.

Lending moral support were top Filipino abstractionist Fred Ramirez, young artist Anton Balao, Choice Expression gallery owner Jerome Jimenez, and 1/Of Gallery owner and Del Rosario's manager Delan Robillos.

Utterly Art is at 229A South Bridge Road, Singapore 058778. Call 65-62262605 or 65-94872006. E-mail utterlyart@pacific.net.sg.



"TUNE Town"

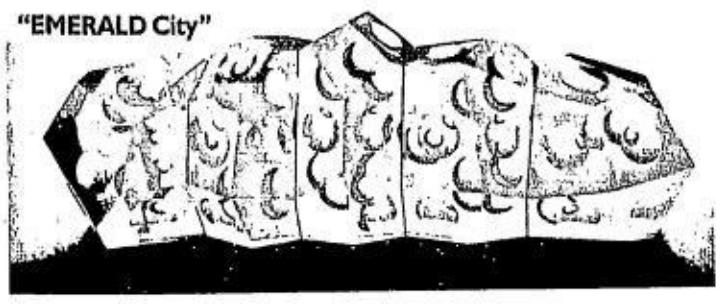
"THREE Storeys, Three Stories" series

"PARTY Line"

WITH CONSUL General Lumen Isleta, a staffer from the and Choice Expression gallery owner Jerome Jimenez

FARLEY with Singaporean collector

"EMERALD City"



'Abstract Emeralds' to cap Orlina's 2007

IN CELEBRATION OF A remarkable year for the artist, Galerie Joaquin has slated a major show featuring 30 of sculptor Ramon Orlina's major works.

The show has become even more timely with the record prices reached by an Orlina piece in the Nov. 25 Christie's auction of Southeast Asian Art in Hong Kong.

The 16½-inch-tall sculpture "Venus V" sold for HK$247,500 or P1,361,250.

This is six times higher than the minimum estimate set by the auction house for the piece. Two Orlina pieces also sold at record prices in an earlier Christie's auction in May, also in Hong Kong.

Titled "Abstract Emeralds," the show opens Dec. 5., 7 p.m., in Galerie Joaquin Main at 371 P. Guevarra St., cor. Montessori Lane, Addition Hills, San Juan. Call 7239253 or 7239418. Visit www.galeriejoaquin.com.

This year marks Orlina's 30th year as an artist starting his career with the work "Arcanum XIX Paradise Gained."

Interestingly, although he started his first artworks with a painting, his first one-man show were paintings on glass.

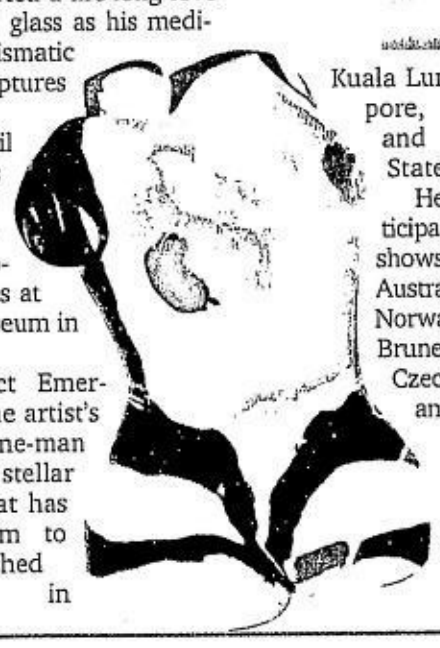
This started a life-long love affair with glass as his medium. Prismatic glass sculptures followed next until he was able to launch his glass sculptures series at Ayala Museum in 1983.

"Abstract Emeralds" is the artist's 28th one-man show in a stellar career that has taken him to distinguished galleries in Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Hong Kong and the United States.

He has also participated in group shows in Sweden, Australia, Japan, Norway, Italy, Brunei, China, Czechoslovakia and Morocco.

"SWEET Offering of the Vine"

"TIDES of Fortuna"



"MOTHER & Child in Prosperity"

Philippine embassy,

ART dealer Delan Robillos

ABSTRACT painter Fred Ramirez

WITH fellow artist Anton Balao

FARLEY with Utterly Art owners Pwee Keng Hock and Kenneth Tan

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THE FILIPINO master's work ranges from landscapes to still lifes.

"NEW York"

Rare Alcuaz works in Singapore show

RARE WORKS FROM the artist's early period will be on exhibit in "Federico Aguilar Alcuaz," the first-anniversary show of Galerie Joaquin Singapore.

The show opens Dec. 7 at 7 p.m. and includes 10 oil-on-canvas works and 10 works in mixed media or watercolor.

The artworks are sourced from collectors in Europe and from the artist's family, these being some of the best from his oeuvre. Several of them cover the period from the mid '60s to the late '70s, the period when some of his most exciting works were produced.

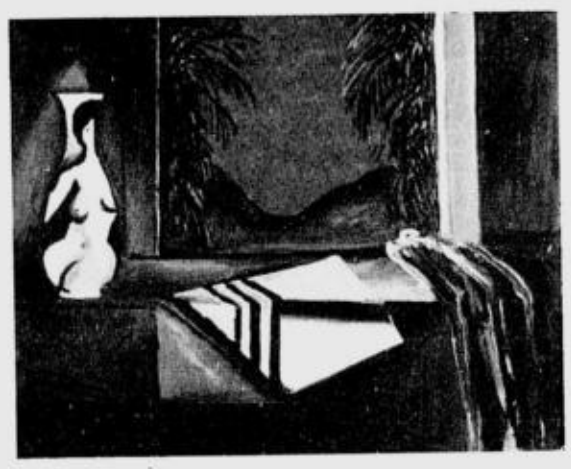
The show is made more timely with the unprecedented record prices received by Alcuaz in the recent Sotheby's Singapore and Christie's Hong Kong auctions.

Alcuaz's "Tres Marias" sold at HK$271,000 or P1,490,000, or nine times above the minimum estimate. "Still Life with Landscape" sold at five times its minimum estimate at HK$112,500 or P618,750.

Included in the show is the 31½" x 39¼" oil-on-canvas piece "Still Life with Cup and Lemons" as well as the 30" x 24½" painting "Still Life with Lemons, Berries and Jars."

There is also the 23½" x 28½" 1976 work titled "Evening View from the Artist's Window."

"STILL Life with Cup and Lemons"



"EVENING View from the Artist's Window"

There are several that are book pieces, having been featured in the definitive book on Alcuaz, "Parallel Texts," by Rod Paras Perez. Featured are rare watercolor pieces such as "Manila 1968" and "Manila 1968" II as well as paintings on Wiesbaden, Germany.

Galerie Joaquin Singapore is at The Regent of Singapore, 1 Cuscaden Road, G/F, Unit 3, Singapore 249715. Call 65-67253113 or 65-65631411. Visit www.galeriejoaquin.com.sg

Born on June 6, 1932, in Manila, Alcuaz first broke into the public's notice when he won the first prize in the Annual Shell Competition and second prize in the UP Annual Art Competition in 1954.

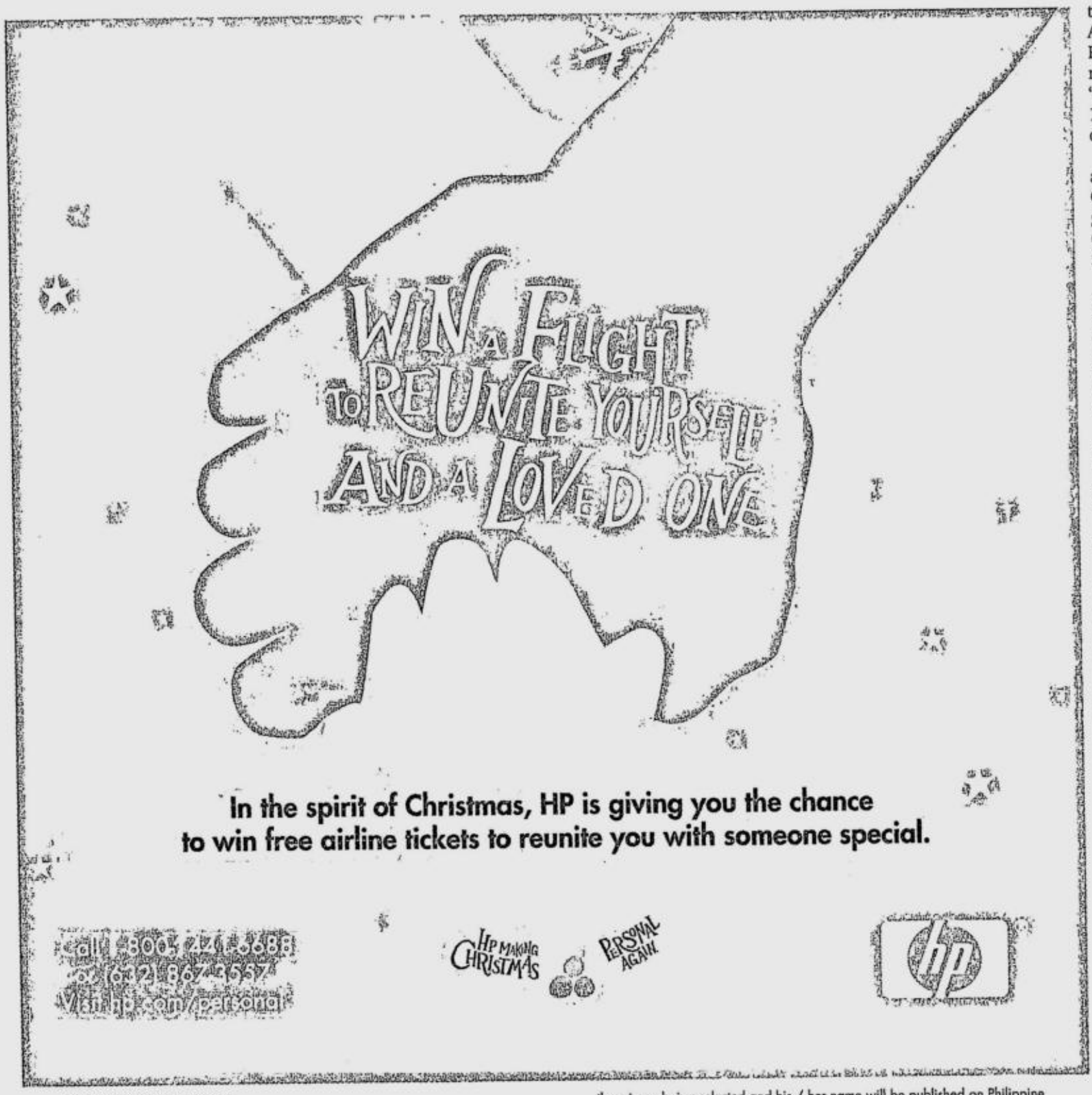
In 1955, he received a scholarship grant from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Spain to study at Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando in Madrid.

He first based himself in Madrid, then in Barcelona. In Europe, he received numerous awards, such as first prize at the Premio Moncada (1957); the Prix Francisco Goya (1958) in Barcelona; first prize at the Pintura Sant Pol del Mar in Spain (1961); and second prize at the Premio Vancell at the Fourth Biennial of Tarrasa in Barcelona in 1964.

In Paris, he was awarded the Diploma of Honor at the International Exhibition of Art Libre in 1961; the Decoration of Arts, Letters and Sciences award from the French government 1964; and the Order of French Genius in 1964.

In 2007, President Macapagal-Arroyo gave him the Presidential Medal of Merit for outstanding accomplishment in the visual arts.

In his 55-year career, Alcuaz has exhibited in leading galleries in Spain, Portugal, Poland, the United States and Germany.



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6. The prize is to be collected at the Promoter's office by the winner.
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7. The prize is transferable, but not exchangeable or redeemable for cash.
8. The prize has to be claimed within 60 days from receipt of notification or the prize will be forfeited upon approval from DTI. No compensation will be due to the winner who fails to claim the prize within the stipulated time. Collection instructions will be provided in the same notification.
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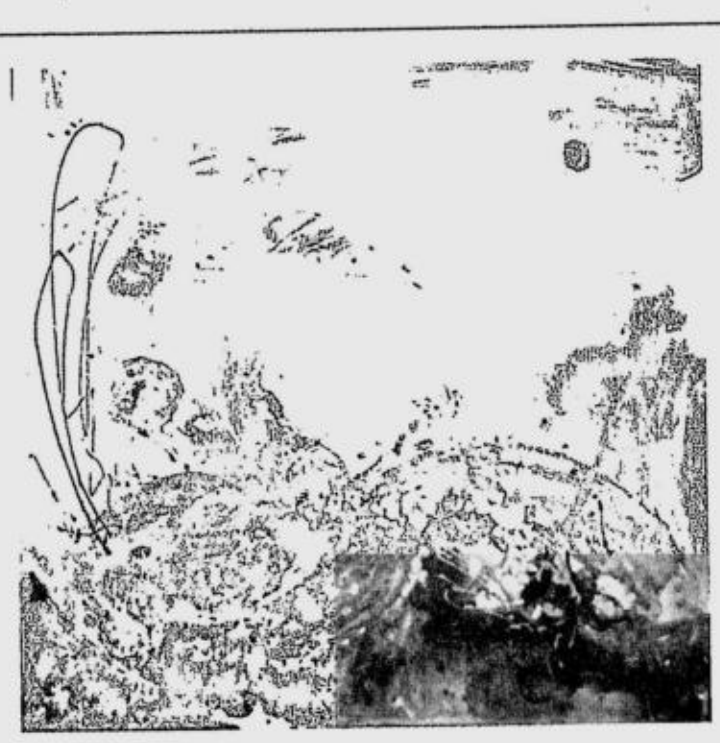

'Automatic' works by Turalba

JOSEPHINE TURALBA, AN award-winning jewelry designer and Paris-trained artist, recently held her one-woman exhibit at Mount Malarayat Golf & Country Club in Lipa, Batangas.

Turalba's paintings, characterized by vigorous strokes, techniques that evoke energy and movement, and the self-assured use of bold contrasting colors, reflect expressionist style.

The artist calls her technique "automatic," a visual representation of her psyche and subconscious.

Among her interests is the sea with its myriad colors and movements.

While most artists choose to commit to canvas this body of water as a serene and placid realm, Turalba opts to interpret the dynamic movement of the crashing of waves, the ripple and surge of the surf.

"The sea is never still, even if sometimes it looks peaceful," she says.

LIFESTYLE

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ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRAVO

Golden PEN

Hundreds of writers from across the nation will gather in Manila Dec. 8-9 to toast 50 years of the Philippine Center of the International PEN

THE PHILIPPINE CENTER of International PEN will mark its 50th year with a two-day national conference Dec. 8-9 at the National Museum of the Philippines. The conference theme is "Literature, Nation, Globalization."

The Philippine PEN (Poets, Playwrights, Essayists, Novelists) is one of 149 autonomous PEN centers in 139 countries. It was organized in 1957 with Alfredo Morales as its first chair, and F. Sionil José, the founder, as its first nation-

GOLDEN/ D2

PEN's mighty achievements

PHOTOS BY LORENZ ANDREW BUENAVENTURA

Writer Susie L. Tan

The Philippine PEN center has always been steadfast in championing the rights and freedom of expression for oppressed writers in the country. It has also done a lot in promoting exchanges among writers of different ethnic languages and cultures in our country through its annual national conferences and publications. Its representation and involvement in activities of the International PEN is instrumental in promoting Philippine literature to the world.

Poet-teacher Marjorie Evasco

The PEN Philippine chapter has consolidated the good energies volunteered by its writer-members to grow in the last 50 years

PEN'S/ D2

The PEN Charter

1 LITERATURE KNOWS NO frontiers, and should remain a common currency between nations in spite of political or international upheavals.

2 In all circumstances, and particularly in time of war, works of art, the patrimony of humanity at large, should be left untouched by national or political passion.

3 Members of PEN should at all times use what influence they have in favor of good understanding and mutual respect between nations; they pledge themselves to do their utmost to dispel race, class and national hatreds, and to champion the ideal of one humanity living in peace in one world.

4 PEN stands for the principle of unhampered transmission of thought within each nation and between all nations; and members pledge themselves to oppose any form of suppression of freedom of expression in the country and community to which they belong as well as throughout the world whenever this is possible. PEN declares for a free press and opposes arbitrary censorship in time of peace.

It believes that the necessary advance of the world toward a more highly organized political and economic order renders a free criticism of governments, administrations and institutions imperative.

And since freedom implies voluntary restraint, members pledge themselves to oppose such evils of a free press as mendacious publication, deliberate falsehood and distortions of fact for political and personal ends.

5 Membership of PEN is open to all qualified writers and literary professionals who subscribe to these aims, without regard to nationality, race, color or religion.

50th Philippine PEN Congress program

THEME: "LITERATURE, NATION AND Globalization"

Dec. 8

9 a.m. Opening ceremonies
National anthem: Mike Coroza
Reading of the PEN Charter: Susie Tan
Welcome remarks: Corazon S. Alvina
Opening remarks: National Artist F. Sionil José

Reminiscence of the 1950s: Froilan M. Bacungan, Amelia Lapeña-Bonifacio, Rolando A. Carbonell, Neal Cruz, Rony V. Diaz, Gilda Cordero Fernando, Rosalinda L. Orosa, National Artist Alejandro R. Roces, Godofredo Roperos

Introduction to the speaker: Lito Zulueta
Keynote speech: National Artist Bienvenido Lumbera

10:30 a.m. "Fifty Years of Philippine PEN and Philippine Writing," video documentary by Malou Jacob

12 noon 50th José Rizal Lecture
Poetry by Domingo Landicho
Song by Don Pagusara
Introduction of lecturer by Nicolas Pichay
Lecture by former Senate president Jovito R. Salonga

2:30 p.m. First literary session: "Literature and National Growth: The Struggle for Nationhood"
Chair: Ricardo de Ungria
Panelists: Merlie Alunan, Antonio Enriquez, Aida Rivera Ford, Cristina Pantoja Hidalgo, Christine Ortega, Don Pagusara

3:45 p.m. Second literary session: "The Meaning of National Literature"
Chair: Jaime An Lim
Panelists: Amelia Lapeña-Bonifacio, Bomen Guillermo, Leoncio Deriada, Rosario Cruz Lucero, Francis Macansantos, Jun Cruz Reyes

6 p.m. Writers' Night, Barbara's, Intramuros
Host: Senate president Manny Villar
Writer-emcees: Wendell Capili, Maria Luna Sicat Cleto, Milagros Laurel, Eric Melendres, Charlson Ong
Performers: Jocelyn de Jesus, Lourd de Veyra and the Radioactive Sago Project
Launching of PEN literary anthologies published by PEN and UST Publishing House

Dec. 9

8:30 a.m. Third Literary Session: "Literature Without Frontiers"
Chair: Lily Rose Tope
Panelists: Wendell Capili, Ian Casocot, José Dalisay, Melba P. Maggay, Nori Nakagami (Japan), Tomasito Talledo

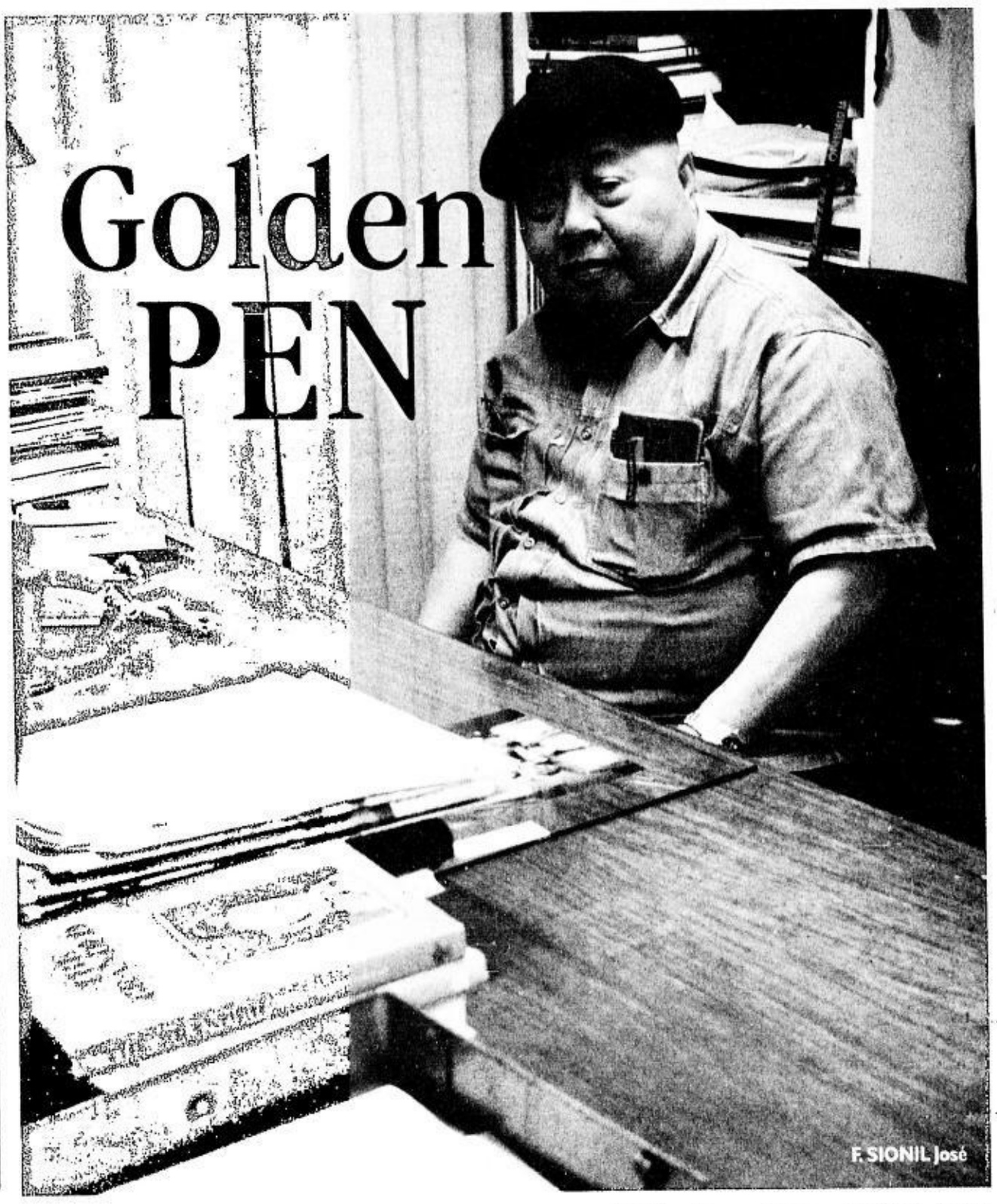
10:30 a.m. Fourth Literary Session: "Philippine Literature in the Postmodern Age"
Chair: Dean Alfar
Panelists: Charlson Ong, Vim Nadera, Krip Yuson, Carlo Vergara, Amelia H. C. Ylagan

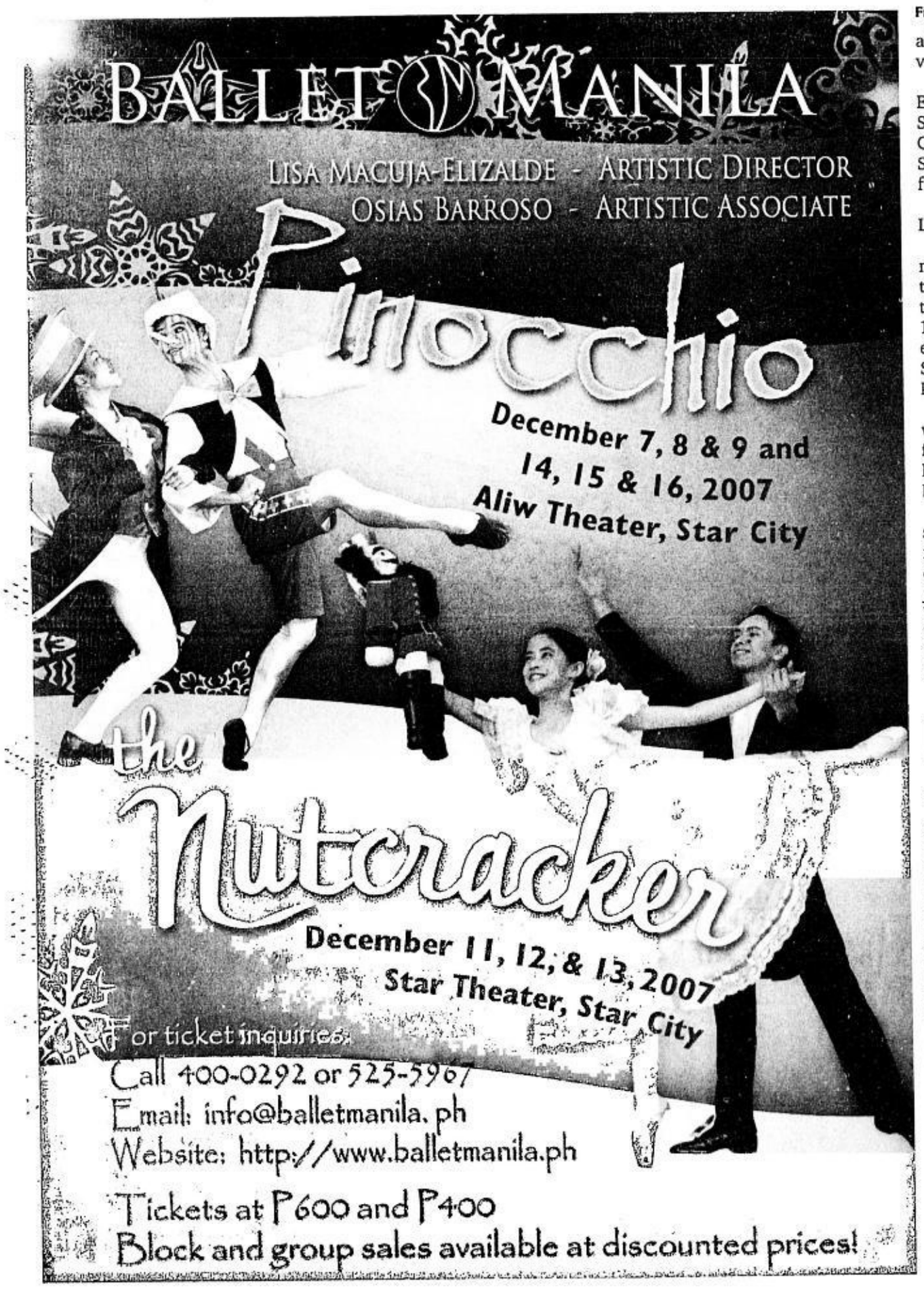
12 noon
Poetry by Reynaldo Duque, Marjorie Evasco, Domingo Landicho
Songs by Mike Coroza, José F. Lacaba, Don Pagusara, Rody Vera
Valedictory by F. Sionil José

2:30 p.m. Fifth Literary Session: "Books, Authors and Readers"
Chair: Karina Bolasco (Anvil)
Panelists: Maricor Baytion (Ateneo Press), Jocelyn Calubayan (UST Publishing House), Ma. Lourdes Camagay (UP Press), Antonio Hidalgo (Milflores), Marites Vitug (Newsbreak)

3:45 p.m. Sixth Literary Session: "Philippine Poetics"
Chair: Marjorie Evasco
Panelists: Gemino Abad, Ophelia A. Dimalanta, J. Neil Garcia, Bienvenido Lumbera, Benilda Santos

5:30 p.m. Plenary session with PEN national secretary F. Sionil José





From page D1

al secretary. Succeeding chairs were Salvador P. Lopez and Alejandro Roces.

The first PEN Center was founded in England in 1921 by Catherine Dawson Scott. Its first president was novelist John Galsworthy. H.G. Wells, George Bernard Shaw and Joseph Conrad were among its first members.

The PEN International Secretariat is in London.

The PEN's Philippine founding was marked by a national writers' conference, the first of its kind after the war, held for two days in Baguio City in December 1958 and attended by distinguished writers from all over the country, including Sen. Claro M. Recto and President Carlos P. Garcia.

Among the conference participants who were later to become National Artists for Literature were Francisco Arcellana, N.V.M. Gonzalez, Alejandro Roces and Edith Tiempo.

In its 50 years, Philippine PEN has sponsored many seminars in Manila and in the provinces, and hosted the visit of distinguished writers such as Soedjatmoko, Wole Soyinka, Richard Kim, Lin Yutang, Khushwant Singh, Jayaprakash Narayan, Hirabayashi Taiko, Hayako Sono, Robert Shaplen, James Hamilton Paterson, Norman Mailer, Gunter Grass, Mario Vargas Liosa, Mochtar Lubis, Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn. PEN also organized two regional Asian writers conferences in Manila and published anthologies including an Asian PEN anthology.

For its golden anniversary, PEN, in cooperation with the University of Santo Tomas Publishing House, is publishing five anthologies edited by Vince Groyon, Neil Garcia, José Victor Torres, Joselito Zulueta and Elmer Ordoñez.

Ordoñez, Philippine PEN chair, is the conference convenor.

During the Marcos dictatorship, PEN stood in defense of freedom of expression and speech. This is an avowed purpose of PEN as embodied in its charter.

Call 5230870 or 5255038.

Patrons of the 50th Philippine PEN Conference include AY Foundation, Inc.; Endika Aboitiz; Eugenia Duran Apostol; Asia Foundation; Ateneo de Manila University; Business World Publishing; De La Salle University; Far Eastern University; Japan Foundation Manila; Doris Magsaysay-Ho; Ramon Magsaysay Jr.; National Book Store Inc.; National Commission on Culture and the Arts; National Museum of the Philippines; Philippine Star; Antonio Rufino; SM Inc.; Solidaridad Bookshop; University of Santo Tomas; UST Varsitarian; Washington Sycip; Sen. Manny Villar.

PEN's mighty achievements

From page D1

as the oldest organization of writers established to protect and foster writers' freedoms. It showed the solidity of its principles of faith, through the courageous advocacy and strong action of its leadership and members, especially during the martial-law years when writers like Alfredo Navarro Salanga and Bienvenido Lumbera were jailed, or summarily executed, like Emmanuel Lacaba.

Moreover, the vision and work of the PEN Philippine chapter has always been focused on Philippine literature in our various languages, in the context of the literary traditions of Southeast Asia, the Asia-Pacific, and the world.

PEN members know they belong to a world community of writers who believe in the basic human freedom of artists to give voice to the truth through their art.

As the PEN Philippine chapter celebrates its golden anniversary in the 21st century, it finds its strengths fortified by the presence of accomplished writers in their 30s and 40s, who are continuing the good tradition of volunteer work for the organization, in pursuit of the organization's programs, among which are to give the younger writers opportunities to develop their craft and publish their work.

This active involvement in fostering an open and healthy environment for the writing community is ample proof that our writers are not content to just sit, imagine and write their poems, stories, essays and plays in the confines of their writing rooms.

They are actively putting their vision as writers into meaningful action in their chosen professions as doctors, teachers, lawyers, media communicators, filmmakers, scholars, critics, cultural managers, and students of literature.

PEN Philippines is raring to go for the next 50 years with more members writing and publishing for Filipinos and the rest of the world.

World-acclaimed guitarist in post-mutiny concert tomorrow

By Pablo A. Tariman, *Contributor*

THOSE WHO WANT A RESPITE FROM scams and snap mutinies better take advantage of the two closing concerts of The Great Performance Series which take place tomorrow (Dec. 4) and Saturday (Dec. 8) at Philamlife Theater.

Here is a welcome insight from classical guitarist Alvaro Pierri, who makes his Manila debut tomorrow.

Pierri, appearing on the Arirang TV show "Heart to Heart," intimated that a good classical guitarist must have something more aside from presence and solid technique.

"I guess a good artist must basically be a good person with a good soul and lots of humility," he said.

Pierri is described by the New York Times as "brilliant, sensitive and breathtaking."

The acclaimed classical guitarist also said that a good musician should remain a curious person and must not stop learning new things. "I am always trying to discover new things and new ideas and even new language that will help me express my music better."

Also an internationally acclaimed teacher, Pierri said he was always trying to learn from everybody, including his students.

"Just by encouraging discussions on music, you learn new things apart from giving your students a part of your experience as a musician. One of my first teachers was my aunt [the famous Uruguayan classical guitarist Olga Pierri] and I am still taking lessons from her when I get to visit her."

Often compared to the great guitar legends Andres Segovia and Julian Bream, Pierri said his performances were better heard than verbally described.

"Some people have easy words to describe their style of playing, but mine is very personal, so words don't come easy. You play to express many particular things, maybe passion, some forgotten feelings that suddenly come alive during the performance. It's really hard to describe."

Scores of contemporary composers like Astor Piazolla, Leo Brouwer and Carlo Domeniconi have written pieces especially for Pierri.

"It's really nice of them to choose me to interpret their new works. Why they choose me is a combination of many things. It depends on empathy with the composers and it's a lot of challenge. Maybe they need someone who can find a new way to express their works, and maybe they like the way I choose my sounds. Maybe they want someone who can better stimulate their music and discover new things in it. It is a combination of many things."

Pierri, along with Russian pianist Ilya Rashkovskiy, will close the Great Performance Series sponsored by the Philippine American Life Insurance Company and Manila Pavilion.

Call 9007023 or 0906-5104270. A few good seats are still available. Free ticket delivery today (Monday) only.

George Yang's classical CD

The launching of George T. Yang's latest CD, "Always Yang," has a remarkable story behind it.

Yang is the same person who heads the McDonald's empire in the Philippines. After making good in business, he rediscovered classical music and took up singing under soprano Rachelle Gerodias. We got it from a good source that he also had special coaching from no less than tenor Otoniel Gonzaga.

"ALWAYS YANG" CD cover

The result is encouraging for someone who took up voice lessons less than four years ago. Together with the CD's launch, Yang also inaugurated his Klassikal Music Foundation which will help poor but deserving talents.

Behind this foundation are Lily Monteverde, Raul Sunico, Rosalinda Orosa and Shirley Bangayan.

Yang regaled media with his Italian version of "Unchained Melody" (Senza Catene) during the launching, and poked fun at his newfound calling.

"In my voice lessons," he said, "I learned about vocal placement, correct breathing and proper use of diaphragm. But, honestly, I don't even know where my diaphragm is." Which had his voice teacher, La Gerodias, grinning and the media persons chuckling.

As for the record itself, I would say it is well-packaged and offers quite a daunting repertoire.

His "O Sole Mio" passes test and his "Nessun Dorma" (a transposed version) is an act of vocal courage that ends miraculously well. His duets with Gerodias (from "La Traviata" and "Phantom of the Opera") may not be that even, but Yang proves he can learn the rudiments of singing through the express lane and achieves generally good results.

That speaks well of him, given that some talents can take ages to learn and still would have nothing to show for the effort.

For the causes he champions and the humility and humor with which he accepts his vocal talents, Yang's CD should be a welcome addition to your collection.

And the winners are...

Contestants from the National Capital Region dominated the top prizes in the recently concluded National Music Competition for Young Artists, which proclaimed the winners in a special concert at the Cultural Center of the Philippines on Nov. 25.

Named top winners in the Piano category were Andrew Bryan Sapigao (first prize), Darren Elias Matias (second prize) and Stephanie Alexis Cruz (third prize), all from NCR.

The top winners in the Dance category, all from NCR as well, were Marcelino Libao Jr. (first prize), Ronelson Yadao (second prize) and Victor Maguad and Philip Joseph Sicat (third prize). Anna Margarita Reyes got the Luva Adameit Award in dance.

The rest of the winners in various categories were: Children's Choir—Young Voices of Adventist University of the Philippines under conductor Joel Punay (first prize); Laoag City Children's Choir under conductor Egdonna Esman (second prize); and the Central Butuan District I Children's Choir under conductor Marites Cagape (third prize).

Voice Male—Nohmer Narito Nival (first prize) and Paolo Roel Rodriguez (second prize); Voice Female—Ferleoni Medina (first prize) and Rexeluz Evangelista (second prize).

High School Rondalla—The Sisters of Mary Boystown Rondalla under conductor Mark Jayson Nuyda (first prize); The Young Rondalla Artists of Nabua under conductor Fe Ballester (second prize); and the Cainta Rondalla Ensemble under conductor Kristian Lorenzo Ferrer (third prize).

The winners received their trophies and cash prizes from Namcya chair Roni Tapia Merk assisted by Namcya officers José Nuñez, Mauricia Borromeo, Sr. Maria Anunciata Sta. Ana, SPC and Antonio Hila.

The Namcya jury consisted of Eugene de los Santos and Camille Lopez Molina (Solo Voice category), Carolyn Kleiner Cheng, Charisse Baldoria and Mariel Ilusorio (Piano); Ma. Lourdes Hermo and Eudenice Palaruan (Children's Choir); Esteban Villaruz and Corazon Iñigo (Junior Ballet); Celso Espejo, Pacita Narzo (High School Rondalla; and José Buenconsejo (Traditional Music Ensemble).

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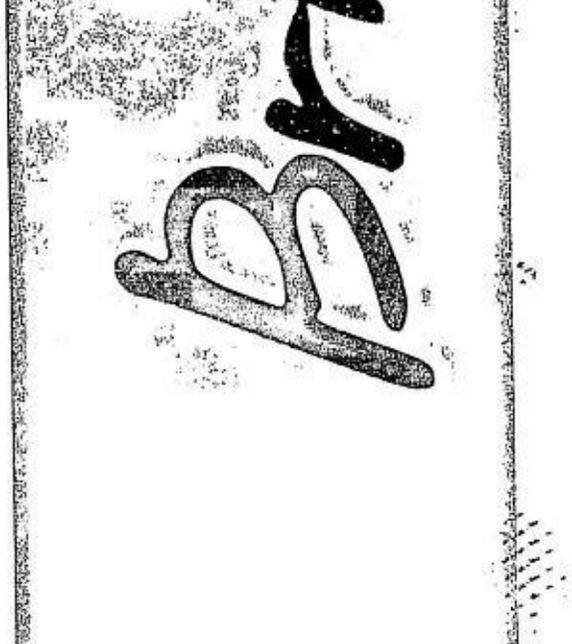

'Romeo and Juliet' from Gantimpala Theater

GANTIMPALA THEATER CAPS ITS PEARL anniversary celebration with William Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" starting Dec. 7, 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., at the AFP Theater, QC.

"Romeo and Juliet" is the perfect play to round up Gantimpala Theater's 30th season. "It has all the elements that our student audiences will surely appreciate—drama, family feud, romance, a lot of kissing scenes and fencing sequences, and I have a wonderful cast of very talented and gifted actors who are giving their 100 percent to make sure that this production will turn out to be a truly unforgettable theater experience for anyone who will view it," says artistic director Tony S. Espejo.

Giving life to the Montague family are Lance Raymundo (Romeo), Pamela Hundana (Lady Montague), Jeffrey Camañag (Lord Montague), Roeder Camañag (Mercutio) and Rico del Rosario (Benvolio), while Monica Llamas (Juliet), Kimberly Diaz (Lady Capulet), Ces Aldaba (Lord Capulet) and Miguel Vasquez (Tybalt) play the Capulets.

Also in the cast are Bodjie Pascua (Friar Lawrence), Michiko Unso (Nurse), Arkin Da Silva (Prince Escalus), Raymond Talavera (Balthasar), Kristian Chua (Petruchio), John Paulo Garcia (Peter) and Francis Ong (Paris).

The artistic and production team includes Joey Nombres (lights designer), Roobak Valle (production designer), Albert Figueras (costume designer), Angie Panogan (choreographer), Glenda Alday (stage manager) and Alice Borbe (production manager).

Performances are on Dec. 8-9 (10 a.m. and 2 p.m., AFP Theater in QC), Dec. 14-15 (SM Southmall Cinema 6, in Las Piñas City). Shows will resume in 2008, starting Jan. 19-21 (also at the AFP Theater) and Feb. 13-14 (Teatrino in Greenhills, San Juan).

Call 8995745, 8963503, 5280603 or 0921-5286308. E-mail gantimpalaproduction@yahoo.com.ph.

KIMBERLY Diaz (Lady Capulet), Ces Aldaba (Lord Capulet) and Monica Llamas (Juliet)

THE SNOWFLAKES in the magical world of Ballet Manila's "Nutcracker"

Ballet Manila mounts 'Pinocchio' and 'Nutcracker' for Christmas

"BUT I WANT TO BE A BOY! I WANT TO be a boy!" said the marionette as he wished upon a star ... And true enough, his wooden limbs became flesh and blood! Thus began Pinocchio's great adventure.

This holiday season, Ballet Manila gives life to this beloved fairytale in "Pinocchio," which goes onstage Dec. 7-9 and 14-16 at the Aliw Theater in Star City.

Featuring the dynamic young dancers of Ballet Manila, "Pinocchio" will be top-billed by Alvin Santos, alternating with Roduardo Ma. Others in the cast are Sofia Sangco and Yanti Marduli (Jiminy Cricket), Jonathan Janolo (Gepetto), Zaira Cosico and Eileen Lopez (Blue Fairy), Francis Cascaño and Harold Salgado (the Fox), Sarah Abigail Cruz and Bea Castañeda (the Cat), Marcus Tolentino (Stromboli), and the entire Ballet Manila company of dancers, apprentices and scholars. Choreography is by BM artistic associate Osias Barroso.

Meanwhile, to open the evening's program, BM artistic director Lisa Macuja leads the cast in another Barroso creation, "Sonata," which had its world premiere at the recent "Music, Trio, Magic" concert with London-based pianist Olga Dudnik and violinist Robert Atchison.

Commissioned to celebrate the birth centennial of composer Edward Elgar, the "Sonata" reprise features Macuja with partner Rudy de Dios and the BM company, in an astounding display of grace, flexibility and precision. Choreographed to the music of Edward Elgar's Sonata in E minor Opus 82 for Violin and Piano, "Sonata" signals Osias Barroso's evolution from dancer and teacher to one of the most promising classical choreographers of his generation.

Going back-to-back with Pinocchio is an added family treat this Yuletide season. Repeat performances of "The Nutcracker" in Star Theater on Dec. 11-13, 5 p.m., will tell the story of a little girl who goes beyond physical appearance and falls in love with a nutcracker doll on Christmas Eve. "Two theaters, two ballets, two magical tales transformed into dance—why hold back on the fun and spectacle?" Thus artistic director Lisa Macuja sums up Ballet Manila's Christmas extravaganza.

For a holiday experience that will linger for the rest of your life, bring the entire family to Ballet Manila's "Pinocchio," live onstage Dec. 7-9 and 14-16 at the Aliw Theater, and "The Nutcracker" at the Star Theater, Star City complex, Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City. Call 5255967 and 4000292.

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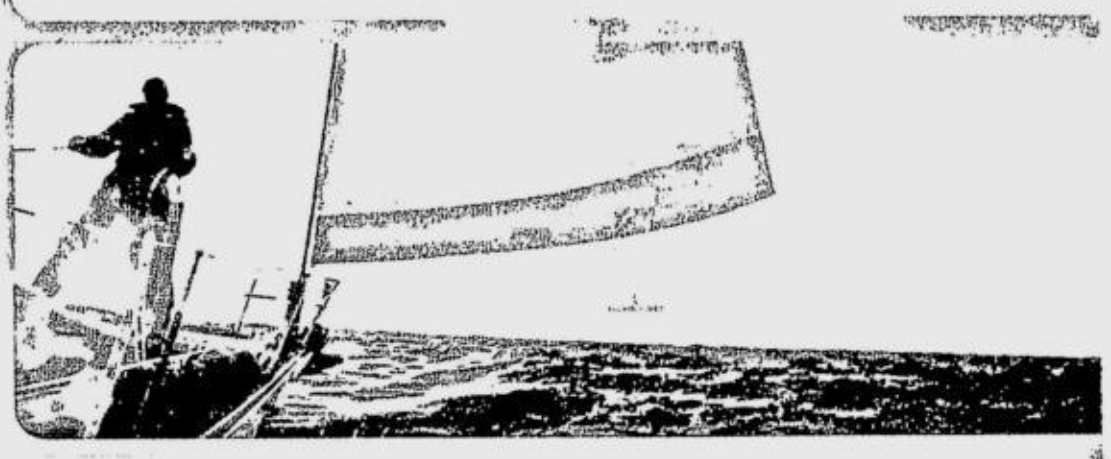
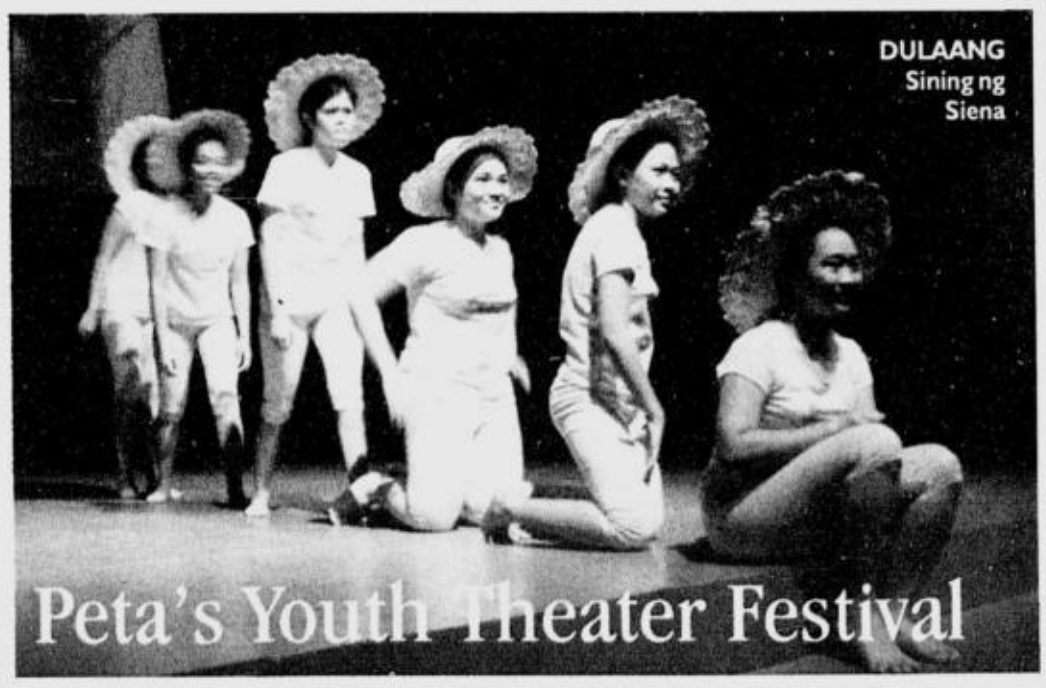
Steven Paul Jobs
The difference between excellence and genius





THIS DECEMBER, THE PHILIPPINE EDUcational Theater Association-Metropolitan Teen Theater League (MTTL) takes the youth forward with the Dula-Daluyan 2007 Youth Theater Festival.

Titled "Kabataan Crossing: A Generation En Route to a New Path of Meaningful Expression," the festival will host more than 12 groups, hundreds of audiences and participants from the MTTL's network of school and community-based theater groups. From Dec. 7-9, the Peta Theater Center comes alive with workshops, fora, exhibits, conferences, performances, and an arts and crafts fair.

The Dula-Daluyan is held every other year. This time, the Peta-MTTL takes on the steering wheel, taking the festival on a joyride of learning and experience. Each visiting group gets to showcase its craft and vehicle of expression in the three-day event.

The festival begins with an opening parade on Dec. 7 and ends with a concert on the eve of Dec. 9, featuring some of the hottest bands today. It will also feature a three-day bazaar with booths offering paintings, accessories, books, music CDs, even bargain clothes, fashion art, coffee and pasta.

The Peta-MTTL is supported by the Church Development Service of Germany. Call 7256244, 4100821, 0918-9354166; e-mail petampro@yahoo.com.

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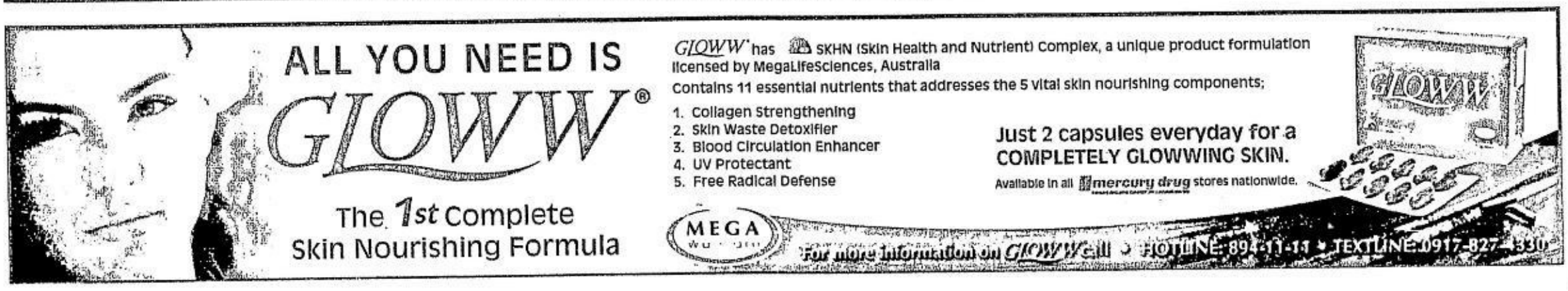
- **Cesar Montano mounts an art exhibit—Dollywood / F4**
- **Vertical Horizon, Rivermaya to perform at the Big Dome /F1**



Da King & Ate Vi

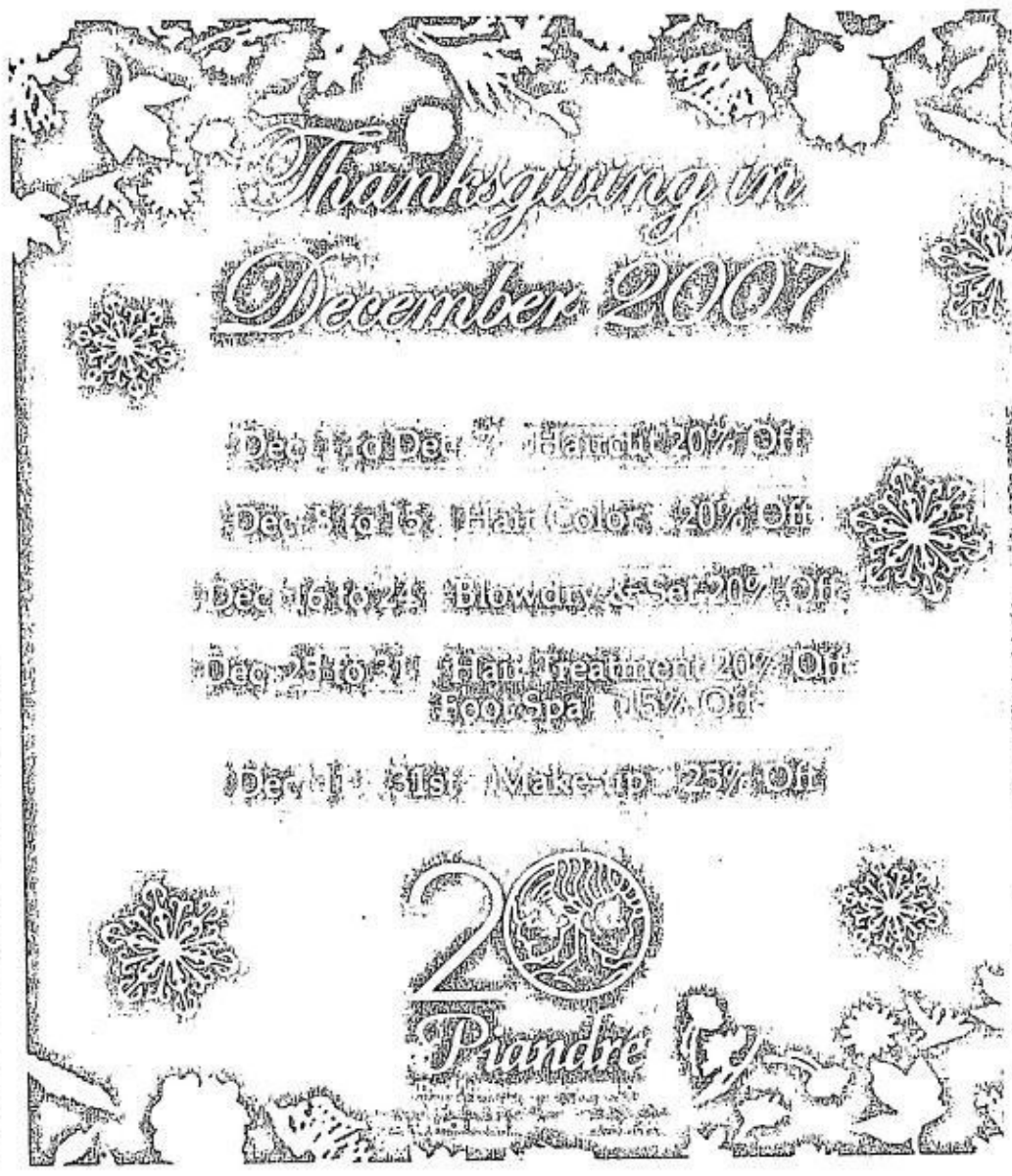
Vilma Santos remembers FPJ as screen hero, icon, leading man ... and swimming instructor

By Bayani San Diego Jr.
Photos by Jim Guiao Punzalan

ON THE SET OF "ALAY KAY Da King," a new TV special on the life and times of Action King Fernando Poe Jr., segment host and "Star for All Seasons" Vilma Santos reminisces about her favorite leading man.

TAKE FIVE

DA KING/ E4



Pinoys win top Asian TV awards

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

FILIPINOS FROM both sides of the network wars won in major categories at the 12th Asian Television Awards, held at the Suntec International Convention Center in Singapore on Thursday.

Current affairs

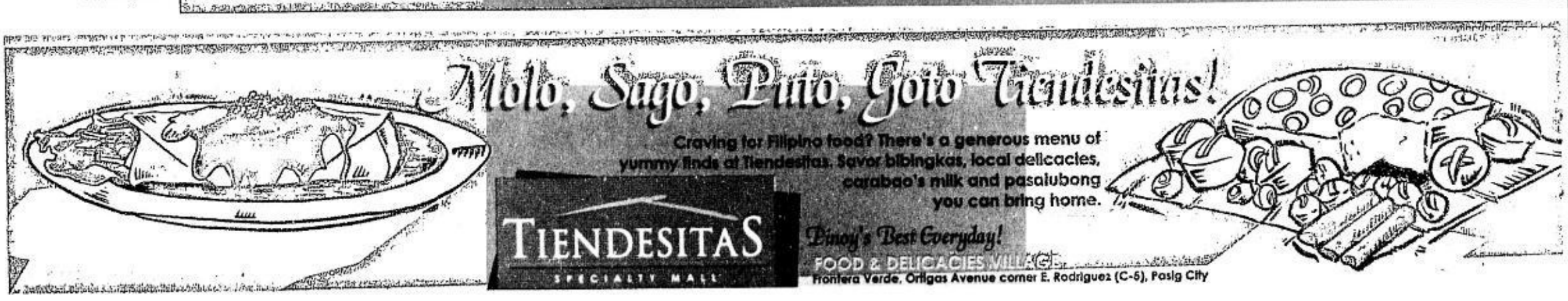
The GMA 7 documentary show, "Reporter's Notebook," topped the Best Current Affairs Program category for its coverage of the war in Lebanon. It bested entries from Korea, Singapore and Taiwan.

"Reporter's Notebook" is hosted by news reporters Maki Pulido and Jiggy Manicad.

Team effort

Manicad, who also produced the winning episode, told the INQUIRER via SMS: "It's a team effort. The feeling [of winning] is great and humbling at the same time.

PINOYS/ E2



Pinoys win top Asian . . .

From page E1

Lebanon was one of the most dangerous coverages our program has [experienced so far]. We never thought we could come up with good material in that situation—especially one that would merit the attention of the Asian TV Awards."

Co-host Pulido said: "It's a great high. It doubles the pressure to produce better stories in the interest of our countrymen."

Program Manager Clyde Mercado agreed. "Serving the people through this show is rewarding enough," she said, but this [award] is a very special bonus."

Best news program

The ABS-CBN late-night newscast "Bandila" won Best News Program for its coverage of the Subic Rape Case Promulgation. It bested entries from Malaysia, Taiwan, India, as well as two Philippine news shows (GMA 7's "24 Oras" and ABS-CBN's "TV Patrol World").

Said Maria Ressa, senior vice president of ABS-CBN's News and Current Affairs: "'Bandila' is just a little over a year old, and we are grateful that its work has been recognized by our peers in the region and the world. We wanted to put together our ideas of nationalism with a faster production pace and more succinct and analytical reporting. 'Bandila' has already been named one of the Top 4 newscasts in the world by the International Academy of Arts & Sciences, making it the first time ever that a Philippine network has received this recognition at the Emmys."

Acting trophy

Gina Pareño topped the Best Drama Actress category, besting performers from New Zealand, Thailand, India and Singapore. She won for portraying the troubled mother of three mentally ill children in the "Rehas" episode of ABS-CBN's "Maalaala Mo Kaya."

"We were only given 30 seconds in our thank-you speech," recalled Pareño. "I was happy and nervous at the same time. I dedicated my award to my family and our countrymen."

Same director

The episode was megged by Jeffrey Jeturian, who also directed Pareño in the internationally acclaimed film "Kubrador."

According to its web site, the Asian Television Awards aims to "recognize and reward program and production excellence" in the region.

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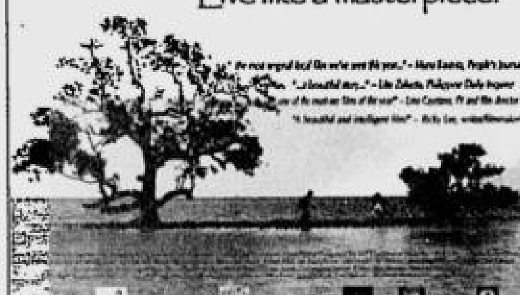

a film by Katski Flores

STILL LIFE is the story of James Masino, a gifted Filipino painter who finds out he is afflicted with a paralyzing disease known as Guillain Barre Syndrome. Faced with a future where he can no longer paint, James leaves his life in the city and goes on a self-imposed exile to paint one last time, one final masterpiece. Unable to imagine a life without his art, he plans to kill himself once he finishes this painting. But Fate intervenes and derails this grand scheme when James learns that he must share this exile with Emma, a beautiful and mysterious young girl who at 19 has lived a life much too old for her years. But it is her courageous and unfailing optimism despite what life has dealt her that ultimately inspires James to realize a life beyond his canvass. Her search for meaning propels his journey towards hope and redemption.

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na-ISNATS na ba ang cellphone mo?

ISNATS is an action-adventure cum satiric-informative movie about a cellphone snatching incident that leads to gangster skirmishes. Comedic scenes by Rock icon (Rocksteddy) Teddy Corpuz(Sugo/Idol ko si Kap) QTV Hapinas Host Ronald "Joaqui" Tupas, Archie Adamos and veteran actor Berting Labra. Indie Actors Jourdan Sebastian and Joel Olaño lead the cast.

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FRED CLAUS G 12:50,3:10,5:30, 7:50,10:10	ENCHANTED G 12:30,2:50,5:10, 7:30,9:50	MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER OF EMPORIUM G 11:30,1:40,3:50, 6:00,8:10,10:20
HITMAN R13 12:00,2:10,4:15,6:20, 8:25,10:30	BEOWULF PG13 12:40,3:00,5:20, 7:40,10:00	THE KINGDOM R13 12:30,3:00,5:30, 8:00,10:30

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Cinema 5: THE KINGDOM 11:45 , 2:30 , 5:10 7:50 , 10:30 R-13

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Nov. 30 , Dec. 01 , 7 & 8 , 2007	" Into the Woods " musical	8:00 PM
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TEATRINO PROMENADE GREENHILLS

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JIGGY Manicad, program manager Clyde Mercado and Maki Pulido during awards rites

GINA Pareño
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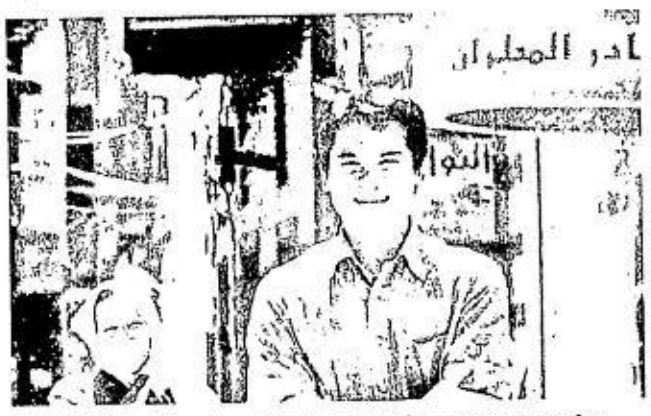

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	4 THE NAMESAKE	5 FRED CLAUS	6 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM	7 ONE MORE CHANCE
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GREENBELT 3	1 THX MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM GUARANTEED SEATS		2 THX THE KINGDOM GUARANTEED SEATS	
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glorietta
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December 8; 6pm; Glorietta 4 Park

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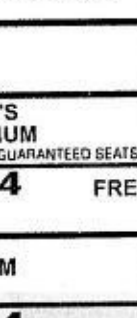

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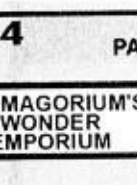

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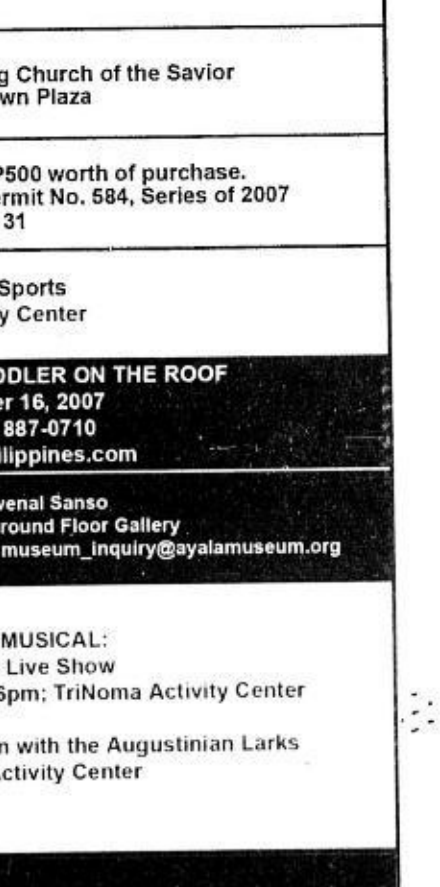

MTRCB Rating: Restricted 13 (R-13)

glorietta GREENBELT ALABANG TOWN CENTER AYALA CENTER CEBU MARKET! MARKET! TriNoma

Da King & Ate Vi

From page E1

But, in the middle of a heartfelt spiel, she's interrupted by a passing ambulance, an airplane ... and a tricycle.

Since the production is using live sound, such incidental noises can grate on some people's nerves.

Not Ate Vi's.

The Batangas governor jests: "Maybe Ron (FPJ's nickname) is toying with us."

That's a seldom-seen side of Da King, she later tells INQUIRER Entertainment in an exclusive interview. "He's a jester."

Paired in three movies (1974's "Batya't Palo-Palo," 1976's "Bato sa Buhangin" and 1996's "Ikaw ang Mahal Ko"), they shared an uncommon friendship that withstood the test of time ... and, she recalls candidly, political intrigues.

Although she's recovering from an illness, she turned up at the studio in Parañaque, a day after the Manila Peninsula debacle, to tape the TV special, to be aired Dec. 9 on ABS-CBN.

The TV special was put together by the Kapamilya network, Asian Eye Productions and the Poe family to premiere a 38-minute music video that was edited by Da King shortly before his passing three years ago.

The music video is composed of choice scenes from his 200 or so movies—including those with favorite leading ladies, from Charito Solis to Sharon Cuneta, and favorite co-actors, from Van de Leon to Lito Anzures.

Da King's pet cause, Mowelfund, is the project's main beneficiary.

Highlight of the music video is a scene from "Batya't Palo-Palo"—which Ate Vi considers "unforgettable."

What's it like shooting this TV special?

I miss Ron. I really miss Ron. When I saw his pictures on the set, I told everyone: It's as if he never left us. He's still here; we just don't see him.

How did it feel when you saw the wedding scene from your first movie together?

Memories! I started reminiscing instantly. I want to ask Ate Susan (Roces, FPJ's wife) *nga* for DVD copies of our three movies.

I was only 21 when we made "Batya." Ninety percent of the movie was shot in Hacienda Luisita (Tarlac) where we stayed for two months.

He taught me how to swim in the hacienda's swimming pool. We were with (co-star) Lorna Tolentino then. I admit that I didn't know how to swim when I did "Dyesebel."

But the most memorable scene [from "Batya"] was the ending, where I ran after him, while he was aboard a train.

What did you call him again?

Ron.

What did he call you?

Vi! But I call Ate Susan, Ate Susan.

What was the real Ronnie Poe like?

Oh my God! It's true what [the special's] script says: He was the quiet type. Very sensitive and the most generous man I ever met in the entire industry.

Please allow me to generalize. Among all my leading men, no one's like him.

It's true that if you were his leading lady, he'd treat you like a queen. He'd give you everything you needed and wanted, just to make you feel comfortable. However, he extended the same respect and care to the staff.

> 'He was sensitive, the most generous man in the entire industry. Of all my leading men, no one's like him'

One time, I craved *balut*. He bought *balut* not only for me, but for the entire crew. The *mambabalut* ran out of *balut* so Ron asked him to call his vendor friends.

Ron treated everyone on the set equally.

That's why he's the most respected actor in the industry, along with Dolphy. It's a well-earned respect. You cannot buy that respect. You have to work for it. He was not an overnight success. He started as a stuntman, as an extra. He started from scratch.

That was something you shared?

Yah! And we both joined politics. When I first ran as mayor [of Lipa in 1998], Ron was among the few people I sought, for advice.

He told me one thing: "You can do it. You have the character for politics. But can you give up your earnings as an actress?" (Laughs.)

The next time we saw each other was at the wedding of Aga Muhlach and Charlene Gonzalez in Baguio two years later. I was then running for a second term, so he teased me: "I thought you didn't want to run?"

Then, two years later, we saw each other again at the Metro Manila Film Fest parade, we both had entries then (hers, "Dekada '70;" his, "Ang Alamat ng Lawin"). It was my turn to tease him: "I heard you're running?"

I asked if he was really considering it and he told me that he'd rather not, but that he couldn't ignore the public clamor.

Unfortunately, we ended up in different political parties when he ran for president in 2004 (she's with the administration; he was an oppositionist).

We were even pitted against each other. There was a rumor that I didn't allow him to campaign in Lipa. But our friendship went beyond politics.

Did you get to talk to him after that?

Yah. But we only talked about our friendship. The only time politics was mentioned was when he congratulated me on my work as mayor.

He never mentioned the controversies. But that's Ron. He was a class act. That's why I have such high respect for him.

What's the secret of the FPJ charm?

It was in his character. He was very *malambing* (affectionate). When in the mood, he was also a comedian. Very caring.

Why does the *masa* love him so?

That's the magic of Ronnie Poe.

I'm also an actor; my life is the *masa*, but that's something I can't explain.

Was it because he was *makatao* (pro-people), *matulungin* (helpful) and *mapagkumbaba* (humble)? Was it because he made movies that told the stories of the masses?

He also gave importance to the principles and struggles of our Muslim brothers. That's why he's still well-loved in Mindanao.

There's this famous story. His movie ("Esseng ng Tondo") was playing in a [Quiapo] moviehouse. In the scene, he was about to be shot by his enemy (played by Chuck Perez). An audience member shouted: "Duck!" Then, someone shot at his enemy on the movie screen!

What were the lessons you picked up from him?

That, in spite of your fame and achievements, you should keep your feet on the ground and continue to help those who have less in life.

After doing this special, how did your perception of FPJ change?

It just confirmed what I already knew. I really meant every word I said in the spiels.

Even if the world turned upside down, no one can replace him.

Like I said at the end of my spiel: "Long live Ron!"

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PREMIERE NIGHT
DEC. 4
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OPENS IN THEATERS DEC. 5

SHANG CINEPLEX

1 ENCHANTED MTRCB GP 2:15, 4:40, 7:05, 9:30
2 THE KINGDOM MTRCB R-13 12 00 2:30 5:00, 7:30, 10:00
3 HITMAN MTRCB R-13 2:45, 5:00, 7:15, 9:30
4 MR. MAGORIUM MTRCB. GP 1:00, 3:15 5:30, 7:45
PREMIERE THEATRE FRED CLAUS / BEOWULF MTRCB: GP / PG-13 2 30, 5 00 / 7 30, 10 00

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BEOWULF	ENCHANTED	HITMAN	ONE MORE CHANCE
1:35 | 4:10 6:45 | 9:20	12:10 | 2:30 4:50 | 7:10 | 9:30	4:20 | 6:50 | 9:20	12:20 | 2:40 5:00 | 7:20 | 9:40

THE KINGDOM 12:55 | 3:35 | 6:15 | 9:00

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ENTERTAINMENT

Vertical Horizon plus new Rivermaya

By Pocholo Concepcion

A DOUBLE-HEADER CONcert with a Hollywood stand-up comedian as front act, is MTV Philippines' forthcoming (Dec. 7) major event at the Araneta Coliseum.

The gig features Vertical Horizon, a US alternative rock band popular with the 20-something generation, plus a special performance by Rivermaya with its new vocalist, Jayson Fernandez. Hollywood actor/stand-up comic Jamie Kennedy, who has his own MTV show ("The Jamie Kennedy Experiment"), opens the show.

Formed in 1990 by Georgetown University (Washington D.C.) schoolmates Matthew Scannell and Keith Kane, Vertical Horizon played regular gigs and released three self-produced albums before being signed to Sony BMG's RCA label.

JAMIE Kennedy

In 1999, the band's major-label debut, "Everything You Want," went platinum. The title track made a big impression on many young Pinoys. "You're a God," another song off the same album, was in the soundtrack of the Jim Carrey movie, "Bruce Almighty."

But the momentum was cut short when

VERTICAL/ F3

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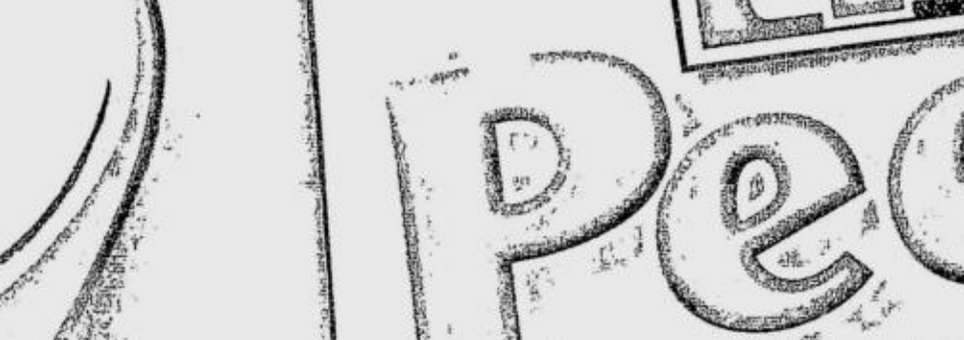

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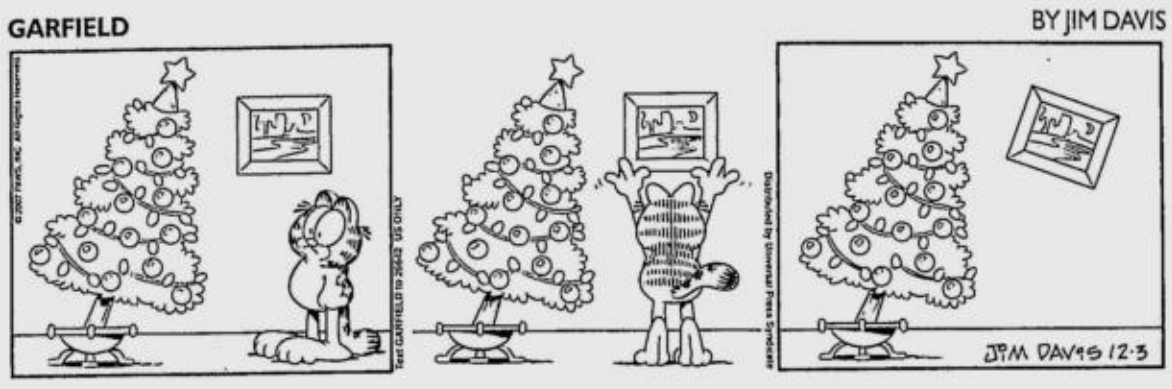

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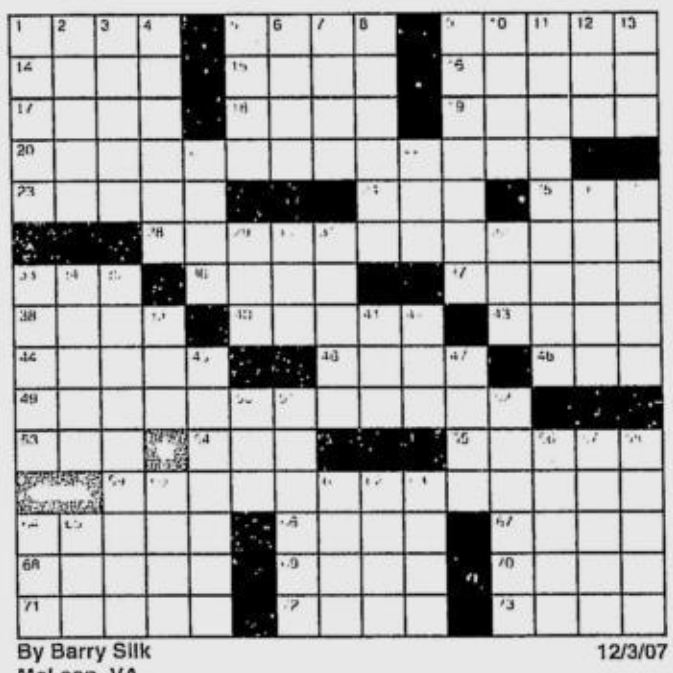

By Barry Silk
McLean, VA

12/3/07

ACROSS
1 Go over 21
5 Makes a choice
9 Roswell, NM neighbor
14 __ Spumante
15 Strike through
16 Ieper by another name
17 Indian bread
18 Kitchen add-on
19 Convenes
20 Specialized property protection
23 Carnival oddity
24 Self-esteem
25 Ms. Caldwell
28 Oxygen carrier
33 NCAA grouping
36 Farm plot
37 Disturbing cries
38 Worn out
40 Riyadh men
43 One of the Pleiades
44 Japanese dish
46 Phony
48 Absolutely!
49 Annual football event
53 Half of MCII
54 Test for coll. seniors
55 Coll. snap course
59 Woodworkers' milieu
64 Magna
66 Young kangaroo
67 Greek letters
68 Muscat man
69 Culture base
70 "Clair de __"
71 Watch secretly
72 Oxen hitch
73 Theme of this puzzle

DOWN
1 Alberta resort
2 United rival
3 Stop, look and look?
4 Unlikely trait for a musician
5 Cart-pulling pair
6 Flower holders
7 Ballerina's skirt
8 Audiophile's setup
9 Choir singing
10 Oil cartel, in brief
11 House-garage connection
12 Track ticket
13 Draft org.
21 Furniture chain
22 In the past
26 Kukla's friend
27 "__ Dream," Lohengrin aria
29 Computer formatting acronym
30 Yow, it's cold!
31 Full of foliage
32 Dot follower
33 Syrian leader
34 Rude person
35 Particle from space
39 Quaker pronoun
41 Grocery sack
42 Reggae cousin
45 Fix indelibly
47 Retired prof
50 French artist
51 MTV host
52 Section of a Calif. city
56 Actor/singer Cassidy
57 Robin of baseball
58 Vaulted recesses
60 Sci. fig.
61 Astronaut's negative
62 Ship wood
63 Bronte heroine
64 Romaine
65 Electric meas.

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

A	B	R	A	H	A	M	■	A	L	F	A	L	F	A
C	R	U	S	A	D	E	■	L	E	O	N	A	R	D
C	A	N	A	R	D	S	■	I	O	C	A	T	E	D
R	C	T	■	D	I	A	L	■	■	U	T	T	E	R
A	T	O	M	I	C	B	O	M	B	S	■	E	V	E
■	■	■	A	N	T	I	G	O	N	E	■	R	E	S
S	H	O	D	■	■	■	S	O	A	R	■	D	R	S
P	O	N	D	E	R	S	■	D	I	S	E	A	S	E
A	M	A	■	L	A	M	A	■	■	■	O	Y	E	S
R	E	C	■	E	M	E	R	S	I	O	N	■	■	■
T	A	C	■	O	P	E	N	A	N	D	S	H	U	T
A	L	O	I	N	■	■	O	U	S	E	■	E	S	A
C	O	U	L	O	M	B	■	T	A	S	H	L	I	N
U	N	N	E	R	V	E	■	E	N	S	U	I	N	G
S	E	T	S	A	I	L	■	S	E	A	D	O	G	S

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12/3/07

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're charming and creative. Many of you have special technical skills. Because you take your work seriously, you sometimes withdraw when you're producing something. You value your daily routine with home and family. This is your touchstone. Although you enjoy the company of others, you're private. This year, you're entering a new life cycle. New paths and fresh opportunities will appear to you.
Birthdate of: Brendan Fraser, actor; Joseph Conrad, writer; Julianne Moore, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You can make great headway in discussions with partners and close friends today. Your frankness and honesty will promote a deeper, better understanding with others.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): People are impressed with you at work because you see new applications for existing things. You know how to take something that's been around a while and find a new use for it.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Love and romance can deepen considerably . Relationships that have been on the fence will suddenly become committed and passionate. (Be still, my beating heart.)

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You definitely can make improvements to where you live today or even to your family relationships. That's because you see a whole new way of doing or saying something.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Many of you will make money today through your writing, talking or ability to deliver something somewhere. You're very sincere in all your dealings with others. You mean it from the heart.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): New sources of income might occur to you today. Since you're starting a new path in life, this is one logical outcome of some of your recent changes.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Your affection for others is very strong today. Everything is suddenly black-and-white. In fact, whatever you want to do, you want to do it intensely! (People had better step aside.)

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): This is a wonderful day for any kind of research. You have the energy and the intensity to search for anything that you're looking for.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): New friends could enter your world today. In fact, contact with others actually might shift your attitude in some way. You could meet a powerful teacher.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You have a chance to change your public image today. If you show others what you can do, they will believe that you can do it. The gods are with you today!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): A deeper appreciation of something might shift your life-long belief system. Or you might have a better understanding about what you already do believe.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Gifts, goodies and possibly cold, hard cash will come to you today. Keep your pockets open! (Relationships are affectionate and intense.)

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis SudoKu By Dave Green

				1			2	
		1	8		7			4
	9		5	2				
	6	2		9			1	
3		8	7		6	9		2
	7			8		6	5	
				6	5		3	
4			2		1	8		
	5			4				

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Difficulty Level ★

12/03

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

9	1	6	8	7	4	2	3	5
5	4	2	1	9	3	8	7	6
8	7	3	6	5	2	1	9	4
6	2	8	5	4	9	3	1	7
4	3	5	7	2	1	9	6	8
1	9	7	3	6	8	4	5	2
3	5	1	2	8	7	6	4	9
2	6	9	4	1	5	7	8	3
7	8	4	9	3	6	5	2	1

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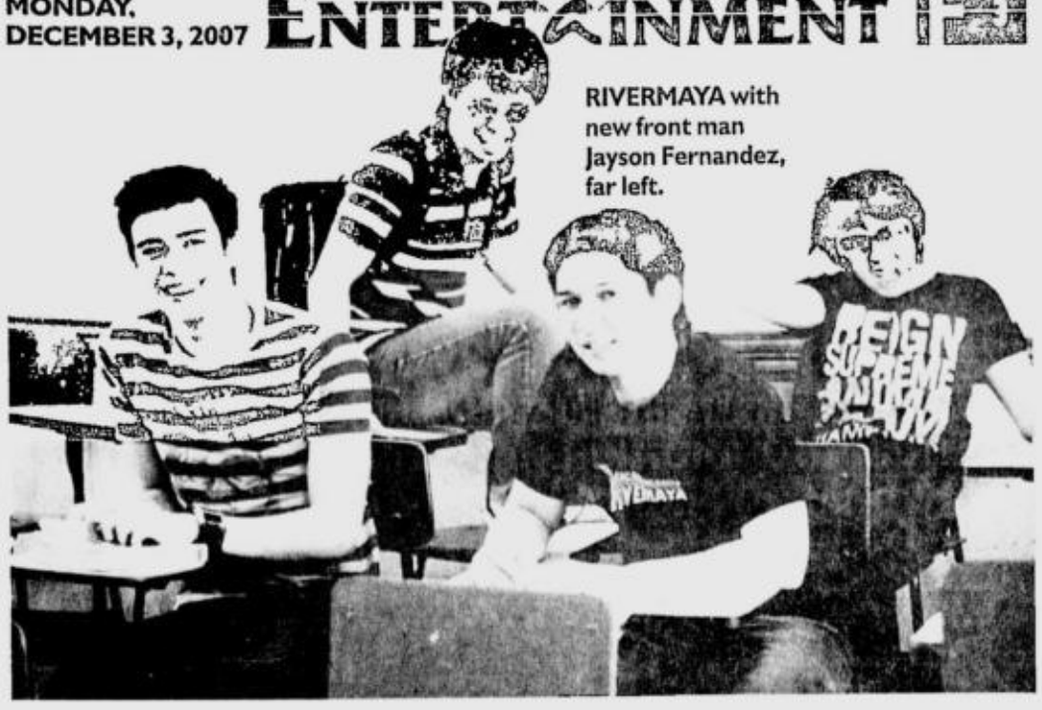
Difficulty Level ★★★★★

12/02



RIVERMAYA with new front man Jayson Fernandez, far left.

Vertical Horizon plus . . .

From page F1

the band was unceremoniously dropped from its record label due to management changes. It would take several years for the band to regain composure, though it never stopped playing.

A long-delayed follow-up CD, 2003's "Go" (licensed to Hybrid, an RCA sub-label), was re-released in 2005 and rekindled interest in the group.

Big buzz

But the big buzz is that a new album is in the works, featuring ace drummer Neil Peart (of the still active Canadian band Rush) on three tracks.

Just for persevering, Vertical Horizon should be seen live.

The same may be said of Rivermaya, one of the country's most prolific bands. It has undergone a number of setbacks, mostly personnel changes, the latest of which is the departure of guitarist, songwriter and front man Rico Blanco.

Not clear

It's not clear exactly why Blanco and the others (guitarist Perf de Castro, vocalist Bamboo Mañalac, bassists Nathan Azarcon and Kakoi Legaspi) left. What's certain is, Rivermaya refuses to fade away.

In the wake of Blanco's sudden decision to split, the band recorded "Bagong Liwanag," a five-song EP, followed by a televised search for a new singer.

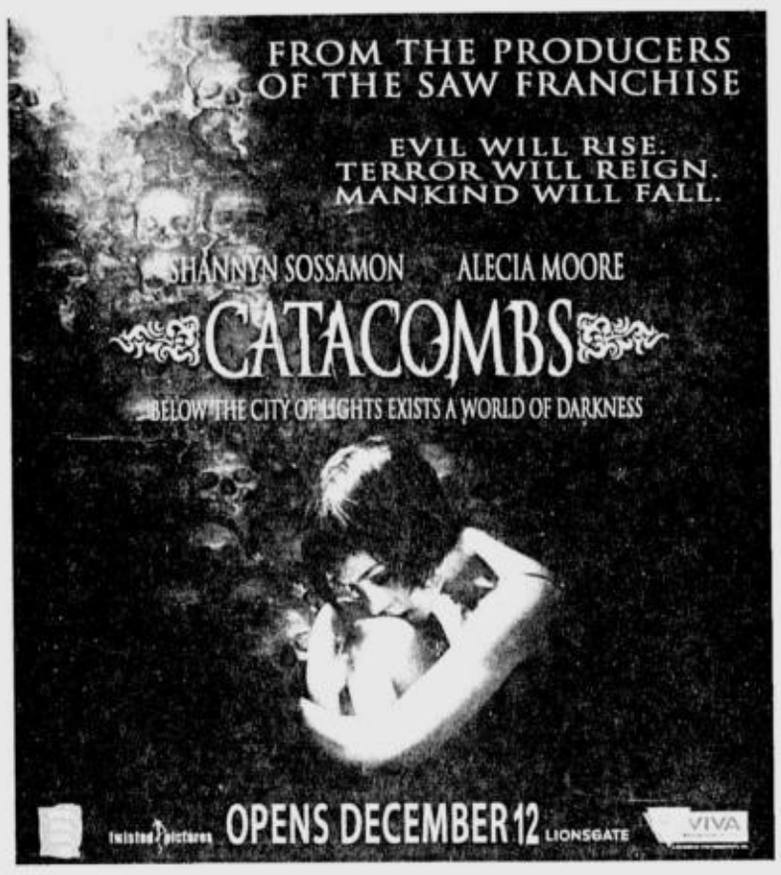
Confidence

Jayson Fernandez, an 18-year-old *mestizo* from Bicol, was chosen from among 400 hopefuls and 80 finalists. A recent guest performance of Rivermaya in a college band competition showed Fernandez's potentials—if he could just exude more confidence with his singing and stage moves.

Aids summit

The Big Dome gig is an opportunity to express that confidence.

The Dec. 7 concert is also a refreshing diversion before MTV ends the year with its annual HIV/Aids-awareness marathon show, "Music Summit 2007," set on Dec. 12.



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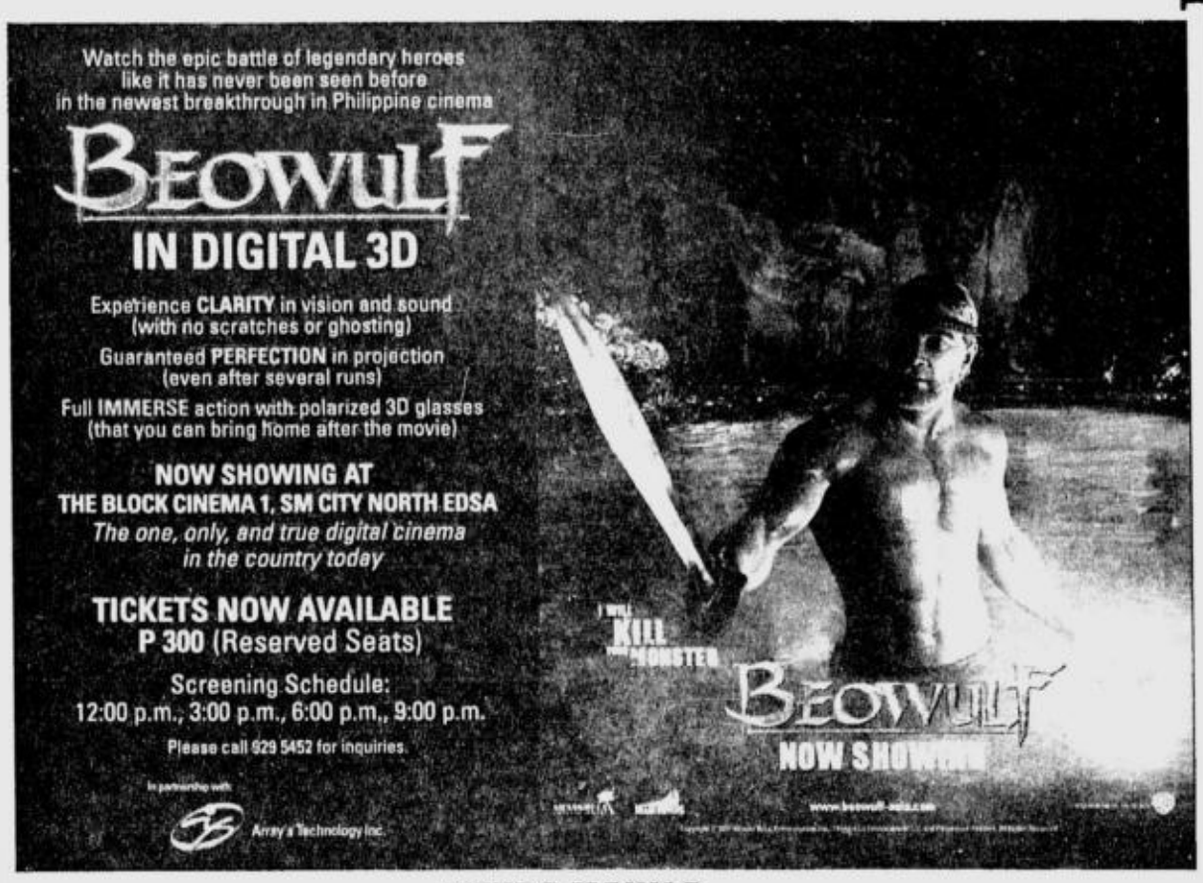

METRO MANILA

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BEOWULF 3D Admission Price: P400
1:00 PM • 5:00 PM • 7:30 PM • 10:00 PM
DEEP SEA 3D Admission Price: P250
11:30 AM • 6:00 PM
1 HITMAN
2 THE KINGDOM
3 FRED CLAUSE
4 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
5 ENCHANTED/ BEOWULF
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SM NORTH EDSA 929-5452
1 BEOWULF (DIGITAL 3D)
2 PASUKOB
3 ENCHANTED
4 ONE MORE CHANCE
MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
THE KINGDOM
BEOWULF
ONE MORE CHANCE
9 FRED CLAUSE
10 MONA SINGAPORE ESCORT
11 PASUKOB
12 HITMAN

SM MEGACINEMA 633-1901
1 THE KINGDOM
2 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
3 ONE MORE CHANCE
4 HITMAN
5 ENCHANTED
6 BEOWULF
FRED CLAUSE
8 BOOGEYMAN 2
9 30 DAYS OF NIGHT
10 PASUKOB
11 MONA SINGAPORE ESCORT
12 THE GAME PLAN

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749
FRED CLAUSE
ENCHANTED
30 DAYS OF NIGHT
HITMAN
ONE MORE CHANCE
BEOWULF
THE KINGDOM
PASUKOB
BOOGEYMAN 2
10 THE GAME PLAN
MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
MONA SINGAPORE ESCORT

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055
THE KINGDOM
PASUKOB
ONE MORE CHANCE
MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488
MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
THE KINGDOM
FRED CLAUSE
ENCHANTED
PASUKOB
ONE MORE CHANCE

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975
ONE MORE CHANCE
PASUKOB
THE KINGDOM
FRED CLAUSE

SM SOUTHMALL 806-6888
1 THE KINGDOM
2 PASUKOB
3 ONE MORE CHANCE
4 HITMAN
5 FRED CLAUSE
6 ENCHANTED
7 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
8 BEOWULF
9 MONA SINGAPORE ESCORT

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416
1 THE KINGDOM
2 MONA SINGAPORE ESCORT
3 ONE MORE CHANCE
4 PASUKOB
5 THE GAME PLAN
6 FRED CLAUSE
7 BEOWULF
8 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
9 HITMAN
10 ENCHANTED

NOW OPENING
SM SUPERCENTER MUNTINLUPA 862 5693
1 PASUKOB
2 FRED CLAUSE
3 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
4 THE KINGDOM

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240
1 HITMAN
BEOWULF
3 ONE MORE CHANCE
PASUKOB
5 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
THE KINGDOM
FRED CLAUSE
8 ENCHANTED
9 ONE MORE CHANCE
10 THE GAME PLAN
11 30 DAYS OF NIGHT
12 MONA SINGAPORE ESCORT

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917
BEOWULF/ MONA SINGAPORE ESCORT
THE KINGDOM
3 PASUKOB
4 ONE MORE CHANCE

FBI Special Agent Ronald Fleury (Jamie Foxx) has just received the assignment of his career: to assemble an elite team (Jennifer Garner, Chris Cooper, and Jason Bateman) and to go to Riyadh to hunt down and capture the terrorist mastermind behind a deadly attack on Americans working in Saudi Arabia. The feds have only one week to infiltrate and cripple a cell bent on jihad to western society.

No training would prepare Fleury and his team for the disorienting culture shock they face once inside this scorching foreign land: a byzantine maze of profiteering politicians and storefront terrorists. Bound by handlers who refuse to play ball with the U.S., the agents quickly find the local law enforcement more hindrance than help and soon grow uncertain of anybody's allegiance.

But when a sympathetic Saudi police captain helps them navigate Riyadh politics and investigate the true cause of the attack, Fleury finds an unexpected comrade-in-arms. In their lightning-fast attempt to crack the case, the partners's search leads them straight to the killers's front door. Now in a fight for their own lives, two teams on opposite sides of the war on terror won't stop until justice is found in The Kingdom

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2 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
3 HITMAN
4 ONE MORE CHANCE
5 THE KINGDOM
6 PASUKOB
7 FRED CLAUSE
8 BEOWULF

SM CITY MARILAO (044)9332013-17
1 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
2 PASUKOB
3 ONE MORE CHANCE
4 BEOWULF

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO (046)474-3100
1 PASUKOB
2 ONE MORE CHANCE
3 THE KINGDOM
4 ENCHANTED/ MONA SINGAPORE ESCORT

SM CITY DASMARIÑAS (046)4323201-04
1 PASUKOB
2 FRED CLAUSE
3 ONE MORE CHANCE
4 THE KINGDOM

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998
1 BEOWULF
2 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
3 ONE MORE CHANCE
4 ENCHANTED
5 PASUKOB
6 MONA SINGAPORE ESCORT

SM CAGAYAN DE ORO (088)859-2884
1 BEOWULF
2 ONE MORE CHANCE
3 PASUKOB
4 ENCHANTED

LUZON

NOW OPENING
SM CITY TAYTAY 286-2502 to 04
1 THE KINGDOM
2 PASUKOB
3 ONE MORE CHANCE

SM CITY LIPA (043) 784-0187
1 ENCHANTED
2 ONE MORE CHANCE
3 PASUKOB
4 BEOWULF

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)9637681-85
1 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
2 BEOWULF/ HITMAN
3 MONA SINGAPORE ESCORT
4 ONE MORE CHANCE
5 LIONS FOR LAMBS/ ENCHANTED
6 PASUKOB

SM CITY STA. ROSA (049)5349811
1 ENCHANTED
2 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
3 PASUKOB
4 ONE MORE CHANCE

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422
1 BEOWULF
2 RESERVED
30 DAYS OF NIGHT
4 LIONS FOR LAMBS
5 ENCHANTED
6 ONE MORE CHANCE
7 RESERVED
8 PASUKOB

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80
1 ONE MORE CHANCE
2 ENCHANTED
3 PASUKOB
4 THE GAMEPLAN

SM CITY BAGUIO (074)6197838-39
1 ENCHANTED
2 PASUKOB
3 ONE MORE CHANCE
4 THE KINGDOM

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45
1 LIONS FOR LAMBS/ MONA SINGAPORE ESCORT
2 ENCHANTED
3 BEOWULF
4 ONE MORE CHANCE
5 PASUKOB
6 HITMAN

SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04
1 BEOWULF
2 ENCHANTED
3 PASUKOB
4 ONE MORE CHANCE

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876
1 HITMAN/ 11TH HOUR
2 LIONS FOR LAMBS
3 THE KINGDOM
4 MONA SINGAPORE ESCORT
5 ENCHANTED
6 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
7 PASUKOB
8 ONE MORE CHANCE

SM CITY BACOLOD (034) 708 1010
1 PASUKOB
2 ENCHANTED
3 30 DAYS OF NIGHT
4 ONE MORE CHANCE

SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

*FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MOVIE LISTING, MTRCB RATING, SCREENING SCHEDULES AND THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AT SM CINEMA

Cesar Montano's art attack

I HAD A MASSIVE ART ATTACK AT THE launch of *mi amigo muy simpatico* Cesar Montano's exhibit, "Dolce Vita," at his Bellissimo resto (Scout Castor corner T. Morato) in Quezon City.

Photorealist Grandier Bella, mixed media painter Florence Cinco, abstractionist Jes Evangelista, expressionist Norlie Meimban and surrealist painter Raul Roco Jr. also have their works on display. Exhibit runs till Dec. 27. For inquiries, call Angela Montano at 414-0274.

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

Buboy's (Cesar's pet name) passion knows no bounds. As his fab wife Sunshine Cruz puts it, "As soon as he wakes up, he is so inspired to paint." I teased her: "You must be his favorite subject. Has he painted you in the nude?" "Oh yes," she said, blushing. "But it's for our eyes only. We were newlyweds when he did that portrait of me. Funny, though, that it's unfinished because while he was painting me, we both got carried away so we ended up continuing our honeymoon instead (laughs)."

No wonder they have three beautiful "masterpieces" named Angelina Isabelle, Samantha Angelene and Angel Francesca.

Mum mom

Dennis Trillo's *muy graciosa* mom Rita is mum about Carlene Aguilar's accusation that Dennis cheated on her when he went steady with Cristine Reyes while she was in the US waiting to give birth. She feels that Carlene is just desperate to air her side.

What about their Hong Kong trip together? "It was Dens' treat for the family so *pinagbigyan namin siyang isama si* Carlene. From the start, we were never close. And as far as I know, on and off *ang relasyon nila*," she said.

Any message for Carlene? "I have no message for her. I just hope she accepts the situation and appreciates Dens' efforts to be a good dad to their baby Calix."

What's her advice to her much sought-after son? "To be very careful in choosing the right girl." Mother knows and "No's" best.

Sam sings

Sam Milby bares his heart and soul in his second album "A Little Too Perfect" (Star Records). It includes Sam's compositions and a song made by Jim Brickman. Sam says the title track best describes the state he is in right now.

Any embarrassing moment on stage? "In a QC concert where I had to sing 10 songs, first song *pa lang, wala na akong boses*; I was sick."

The Sam epidemic has spread. Every girl I know is terminally crazy about him.

Sequel

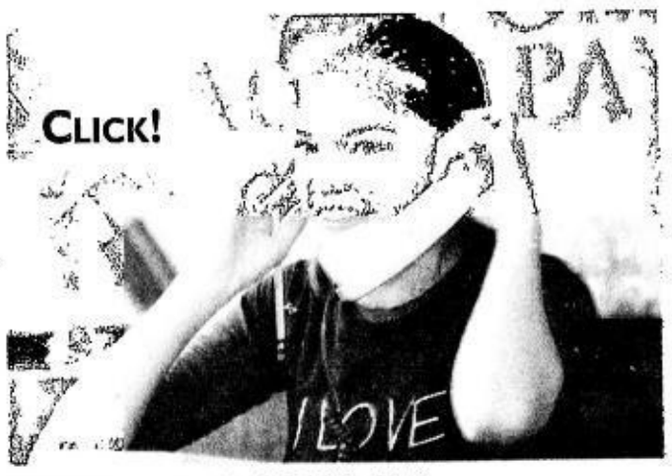
Star Cinema's "Sakal, Sakali, Saklolo" is a sequel to last year's Metro Film Fest top-grosser "Kasal, Kasali, Kasalo." Judy Ann Santos and Ryan Agoncillo continue their marital saga as they cope with the rigors of first-time parenting.

Direk Jose Javier Reyes' fave scene in the movie is when Ryan's character finally affirmed to his mom (Gloria Diaz) that despite marriage and fatherhood, he still loves her.

Fuse

Studio 23 launched its Fresh US Episodes (Fuse) in which six popular programs are aired here just three weeks after their US telecast. These are "Desperate Housewives" (Thursday, 9:30 p.m.), "Smallville" (Wednesday, 9:30 p.m.), "Grey's Anatomy" (Monday, 8:30 p.m.), "Ugly Betty" (Tuesday, 9:30 p.m.), "Kid Nation" (Sunday, 6:30 p.m.) and "The Amazing Race 12" (Monday, 9 a.m. and Tuesday, 8:30 p.m.).

E-mail wateringholeshangrila@yahoo.com.



RHIAN Ramos in "The 700 Club Asia"

PETER Sellers with Claudia Cardinale in "The Pink Panther"

'Break the Bank' a model format

TWO COUNTRIES, POLAND AND Malaysia, have followed the format of the Philippine franchise of Endemol's hit game show, "Break the Bank" because of the look and feel of Studio 23's nightly prime time program.

"Kabarkada: Break the Bank" is the participation-TV version of the game show, "Deal or No Deal."

Unlike "Deal or No Deal" that requires studio contestants, "Kabarkada: Break the Bank" has home viewers playing the game, with host Mo Twister calling them on their mobile phones.

The program airs weeknights, starting at 7:30.

Free Christmas gifts

ABS-CBN's current affairs program "Noypi, Ikaw Ba 'To?" tests the Filipinos' Christmas spirit as it conducts various social experiments intended to capture people's instant reactions upon receiving simple gifts.

In the show, a special team is deployed to various different parts of Metro Manila to give blankets to the homeless, coffee to night-duty guards, new shoes to shoemakers, towels to drivers, cold water to street cleaners and candles to churchgoers.

The program airs tonight after "Bandila."

Success secrets

Celebrities recently graced the live telecast of "The 700 Club Asia's" "Tuklasin: Sikreto ng Tagumpay" on Q11 to share the success secrets in their chosen careers.

Among the featured celebrities were actress-TV host Lani Mercado, stage actress-singer Isay Alvarez, TV personality Rhian Ramos, "Eat Bulaga" host Julia Clarete, "Starstuck" Ultimate Sweetheart Jewel Mische, singer Jeffrey Hidalgo and "Pinoy Pop Superstar" finalists Michael Garcia and Charmaine Piamonte.

Replays can be viewed on the website www.cbnasia.org/telethon/sikreto.

Saving the planet

The final installment in the CNN Future Summit initiative, "Saving Planet Earth," tackles the effects of climate change and what can be done to mitigate it.

The hour-long program, hosted from Singapore by Richard Quest, brings together five distinguished experts: Iceland President Olafur Grimsson; Solar Impulse president Bertrand Piccard; Sunita Narain, member of India Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's council on climate change; Danish writer and academic Bjorn Lomborg; and Barrie Pittock, contributing author to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

It premieres Dec. 18 at 7 p.m., with replays on Dec. 22, 2 a.m. and 6 p.m. and Dec. 24, 2 a.m.

Comedy classics

Inspector Clouseau (Peter Sellers) is a bungling investigator hot on the trail of a burglar (David Niven), who schemes to steal the rare "Pink Panther" gem in "The Pink Panther" on Dec. 29, 9 p.m. on the MGM Channel.

In "Curse of the Pink Panther" on Dec. 30, 9 p.m., Inspector Clouseau (Roger Moore) is missing and the Pink Panther (Niven) is hot on his trail in this film which also stars Joanna Lumley, Herbert Lom and Robert Wagner.

'Miya' on Q-11

"MIYA," A DAILY INSTRUCTIONAL PROgram for pre-schoolers, premieres today, 8:30 a.m. on Q-11.

With toy maker Kuya JK and cat friend Miya, the show aims to provide education and entertainment for young children.

Presented in English, it also has Jigsaw, the mouse and puzzle-keeper.

Through songs, dances and "Story Time," Miya and Kuya JK learn about the world around them.

"Miya" airs weekdays at 8:30 a.m. and Saturdays and Sundays at 9 a.m.

'Tirador' UP preem set tonight

THE UP FILM INstitute premieres Brillante Mendoza's "Tirador" (international title: "Slingshot") tonight at 7, to open the Cine Veritas Human Rights Film Festival.

The film had its world premiere in Toronto last September, and was exhibited in the Dragons and Tigers Out-of-Competition category in Vancouver, also in September.

Its Asian premiere was held in Pusan, South Korea, in October.

More screenings are set across the globe till the middle of next year in other international festivals.

In the Morocco Film Fesitval this month, it vies in the main competition for the Golden Star Grand Prize. In February, it will be shown in the 58th Berlin Film Festival's International Forum of New Cinema.

OPENS WEDNESDAY

" IN THE TRADITION OF THE LORD OF THE RINGS AND HARRY POTTER THE GOLDEN COMPASS TAKES ITS PLACE AMONGST THE GREAT FANTSY FILMS OF ALL TIME."
~ Ben Lyons / E!